Week ending Sept. 19 1959

JOHN BULL

Everybody's Weekly

EVERY WEDNESDAY 5d

Begins this week: The heroic story of **LANCASTRIA**

The war's greatest sea disaster

Where are the Liberals marching now?

Stories by P. G. WODEHOUSE THURMAN WARRINER and OLAF RUHEN

The man in the shadow of the Big Two

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JOHN BULL
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The Cover

No doubt about it. It's the right family and the right dog. The same old smell beneath all that tan; the same old cuddly puppy under all that curly hair. "There's certainly no barking up the wrong family tree here," says cover artist Zelinski. "And I'll bet he can't wait to get back to that old familiar basket; shed some of that elegant grooming in the old familiar garden—and make sure that the dog next door hasn't found the bone buried behind the compost heap."

Free Speech

JOHN BULL: EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech." Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to our Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post and in our feature "We Advise."

Fearless And Forty

LAST week, at the age of forty-one, I resigned from a pensionable position which I had occupied for fifteen years. My reason? I felt I was in a rut, that my mental horizons were too constricted, and that my mind and imagination were becoming hidebound by habit.

Making a final trip round the works to say farewell to a multitude of friends, I was struck by their varying reactions to my news.

Those of my own age were mainly envious. "Thought of it myself for years, old boy. Hate the place—wish I had the courage to do it."

Among the younger fellows—twenty to thirty—the note was one of consternation. "What, leaving, with no job to go to? You must be mad."

Most of the older men had seen something of the depression and might have been expected to take a cautious view. But why the timidity of the young?

Has the combination of sustained full employment and the welfare state robbed them of self-reliance, leaving initiative and adventure to the over-forties?—R. ABBS, Loughborough, Leicester.

Making McHay

One thing puzzles me after a short visit to Scotland. Why is it that in England haystacks are shaped like small cottages and over the border they are cylindrical with cone-shaped tops?—M. D., Preston.

"Haystacks don't only differ between Scotland and England," says a farming expert. "They are built in different ways within a range of forty miles in some parts of England.

"The varying shapes are generally merely local custom, although originally this may have been influenced by the weather conditions of each area."

Valuable Lesson

When I was a young schoolgirl the lesson which I enjoyed most was one marked "Citizenship."

I must have had a very good teacher, for the lessons were indelibly imprinted on my mind and many of them I have handed down to my own pupils.

I have taught in many schools, but never has the word "citizenship" appeared on any timetable and I cannot help thinking that it would be well if it were reintroduced.

Children like responsibilities and if trusted are anxious to do right. A great deal of the increasing violence in the young is caused through ignorance and not wilful wickedness. It is up to teachers and parents to rectify this.—MRS. E. M. ATKINSON, Queens Road, Doncaster.

"Various aspects of the old subject known as citizenship are now taught as part of other subjects—family education, current affairs, modern history, and so on," says the Ministry of Education.

Fighting Farmer

As "the original pylon-fighting farmer" I was interested in the letter about "our stately pylons" and their "aesthetic beauty" ("Free Speech," August 29). John Ward's happy-go-lucky attitude may be fine for a farmworker, but not for the man whose land the pylons cross.

These pylons ruin farmland, sterilizing it. Farmworkers won't go near the cables in wet or humid weather for fear of death, and you

dare not build nearby. Another snag: crop-spraying from the air is practically impossible.

In ten years' time there will be such a tangled network of cables across Britain that they'll have to be put underground. So why not save taxpayers' money and do it now?—DUDLEY GLANFIELD, Windlesham, Surrey.

In 1956 Farmer Glanfield hit the headlines with his fight to keep a pylon off his land. He threatened electricity board workmen with booby-traps, dogs and a bull—above he is pictured with a gun.

In 1957 the cable went up, but he claimed that his fight ensured that in future landowners would be properly consulted.

Winter's Fans

My wife and I are alone among our friends in holding an opinion which seems to shock many people—that summer is a bore.

Especially a long, hot summer like this year's. It may be enjoyable enough if all you have to do is lie on a beach and acquire a varnished skin. Unfortunately we have to work in hot, dusty offices and those glorious June afternoons are something of an ordeal.

Furthermore, we don't like the social barrenness of summer. We are all too busy in our gardens to visit each other—and we're put off from watching television or going to the cinema by the guilty feeling that we should be out in the healthy sunshine.

Admittedly, when living in a city the weather does not affect one's life so much as it does in the country. But we find that we can work and play harder in winter.

For children, sportsmen and ardent gardeners, June, July and August must be heavenly. Frankly we are longing for those long winter evenings.—JOHN BRIGGS, Manchester.

Top Tongues Tied

Amid the present welter of top-level courtesy calls I am surprised that it's taken for granted that our statesmen should not be fully equipped for their jobs.

I refer to their inability to speak and understand each other's languages.

No ordinary business would hire staff for an overseas branch without demanding some knowledge of the local tongue. Yet the greatest powers in the world send their top men to conferences which may determine the world's future—and leave them at the mercy of interpreters.

Our top men are paid well enough. Why not demand from them the not too rigorous condition—that they take a few lessons in the language of their opposite numbers?—A. L. B., Paisley, Renfrewshire.

Penny Riddle

As a clerk dealing with large amounts of cash I cannot understand why pennies are not made double the weight of halfpennies. Silver can be checked easily by weight—no matter the mixture of coins, £5 in silver weighs 1¼ lb.

Coppers can be checked by weight only if pennies and halfpennies are separated. What is the reason for this time-wasting difference?—P. NELSON, Stanmore, Middx.

"When the present bronze penny and halfpenny were introduced in 1860 it was decided to make them fill some useful domestic purpose," says a spokesman of the Royal Mint.

"The penny was designed as a handy means of assessing weight—forty-eight to a pound—and the halfpenny to measure exactly an inch."

Unhandy Hands

The reason for all the slouching we see today ("Free Speech," August 29)

is the abolition of swagger sticks by the army and the going out of fashion of walking sticks.

With a stick a man had something to occupy his hands. Now he's at a loss to know what to do with them.

A few, the self-important, grasp their coat lapels; others put their thumbs in waistcoat armholes. But the hands-in-pockets type predominates.—B. CROCKER, West Holme, South Zeal, Okehampton.

Testing Time

My driving instructor has told me that there is a waiting-time of three to four months to take the driving test. Yet one pupil was called for the test within a week or two of applying, and had to rush the rest of his course.

Could not the waiting time be standardized so that one neither took the test too soon—nor had to wait unnecessarily for it?—PETER A. WILSON, Watford, Herts.

"The average waiting-time—about ten weeks—varies from area to area depending on the number of applicants," says the Ministry of Transport. "It's obviously impossible to lay down an exact waiting-time. The person mentioned could have had his test postponed if he had wished."

Camera Conscious

When I handed over my filled-in form to buy some premium bonds, the post office clerk would not accept it as it had been folded in my pocket. The reason, he said, was that it had to be photographed. Why?—F. HIGGINS, Long Eaton, Nottingham.

"At first we refused all folded or torn forms," says the G.P.O. "Now we leave it to the clerks to see that forms aren't too badly marked.

"We photograph the forms to get

Wise families use the Soap Doctors choose

It is believed that more Doctors wash their own hands and faces with Wright's Coal Tar Soap than with any other toilet soap.

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And, for that matter, completely hygienic.

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Free Speech

continued from page 3

a duplicate copy, filing it under the number so that we can trace the holders of Ernie's lucky numbers."

Class Distinction

I totally disagree with the reader who attacks school uniforms ("Free Speech," August 29). He has never faced a class wearing gaudy dresses and blinding jerseys.

He has never seen a class where poorer children in torn and faded clothes cower beside the well-dressed children of wealthy parents.

I don't think this reader has considered how uniforms banish all social distinction and snobbery. And does he realize what an attraction the uniform is to a child not used to wearing it?

As for paying through the nose—help is readily given by many authorities to parents who can't afford it.—MISS P. SHAW, Oughtibridge, Sheffield.

. . . As a teacher with years of experience I know that school uniforms give the wearer a sense of purpose in himself, his school and his town or village.

Damage to property goes down, work improves and the whole tone of a school can be lifted almost overnight, as if by magic, when school colours are introduced.—SCHOOLMASTER, Ayrshire.

Two For One

Sometimes when a post office hasn't had a postal order of the value that I required I have been charged double poundage for two of lesser value.

Recently, however, I was given two for the price of one, and the postmistress put me wise to the fact that her rule book says this is quite in order if she runs out. So I'll know next time I meet a clerk who doesn't know the rules.—D. B. STARK, Lessingham Avenue, Wyke Regis, Dorset.

"Mr. Stark is quite right," says the G.P.O. "It's wrong to charge double—and we regret it if ever it occurs by a clerk not knowing all our many rules."

A Family Matter

A Scots couple I know returned home after living in Canada and applied for family allowance for one of their two children. They were told that they would have to wait six months.

Fair enough, they thought—until the official added: "Pity you haven't been resident in Italy or Switzerland"—and he named a few other non-Empire countries—"we have reciprocal agreements with them and you would have been paid straight away."

What a slap in the face! And what an insult to Canada.—J. G., Stenhousemuir.

"No insult at all," says the Ministry of Pensions. "Any country can ask for an agreement and we will negotiate. Australia has one. So have New Zealand, Israel, Isle of Man and Jugoslavia, among others. We signed one with Denmark a few weeks ago."

It's The Limit

The system of signposting speed restriction areas beats me. Why is it that in some derestricted areas small, diagonal bar signs are attached to every lamp standard, often for miles?

In a built-up area the approach is marked with a solitary "30" sign, which can easily be missed. Surely it should be the other way round, with repeated 30-limit reminders in a restricted area. Then drivers could assume that when signs are discontinued they are in a derestricted area.—G. F. EDGE, Swinton Hall Road, Swinton, Manchester.

"Unless a road has been specially derestricted, drivers can take it that where lamp standards are less than two hundred yards apart it is in a restricted area," says the Ministry of Transport. "So there is no need for extra speed-limit signs."

Flown Away?

Although we have had such a hot summer, in this part of the country at least we have been troubled by remarkably few flies.

Are people exterminating more flies—or is there some other reason for their scarcity this year?

It used to be that most shops had to have flypapers, but I can't remember the last occasion I saw one.—MRS. V. WARD, Earl Street, Longsight, Manchester, 12.

"It's been an exceptionally dry summer and that means there's less decaying material lying about for flies to breed on," says an expert.

"In addition, people are becoming more hygiene-conscious every year and are making more efforts to end the nuisance of flies."

Revolution in Rafat . . . Murder at Meadowfield

It seems a long way from the strife-torn Middle East to the superior English girls' school. But death travels fast. Somewhere among the cooing doves and the gentle atmosphere of Meadowfield, a killer is loose. Somewhere, too, lies a fortune in jewels.

This is a chilling mystery that only

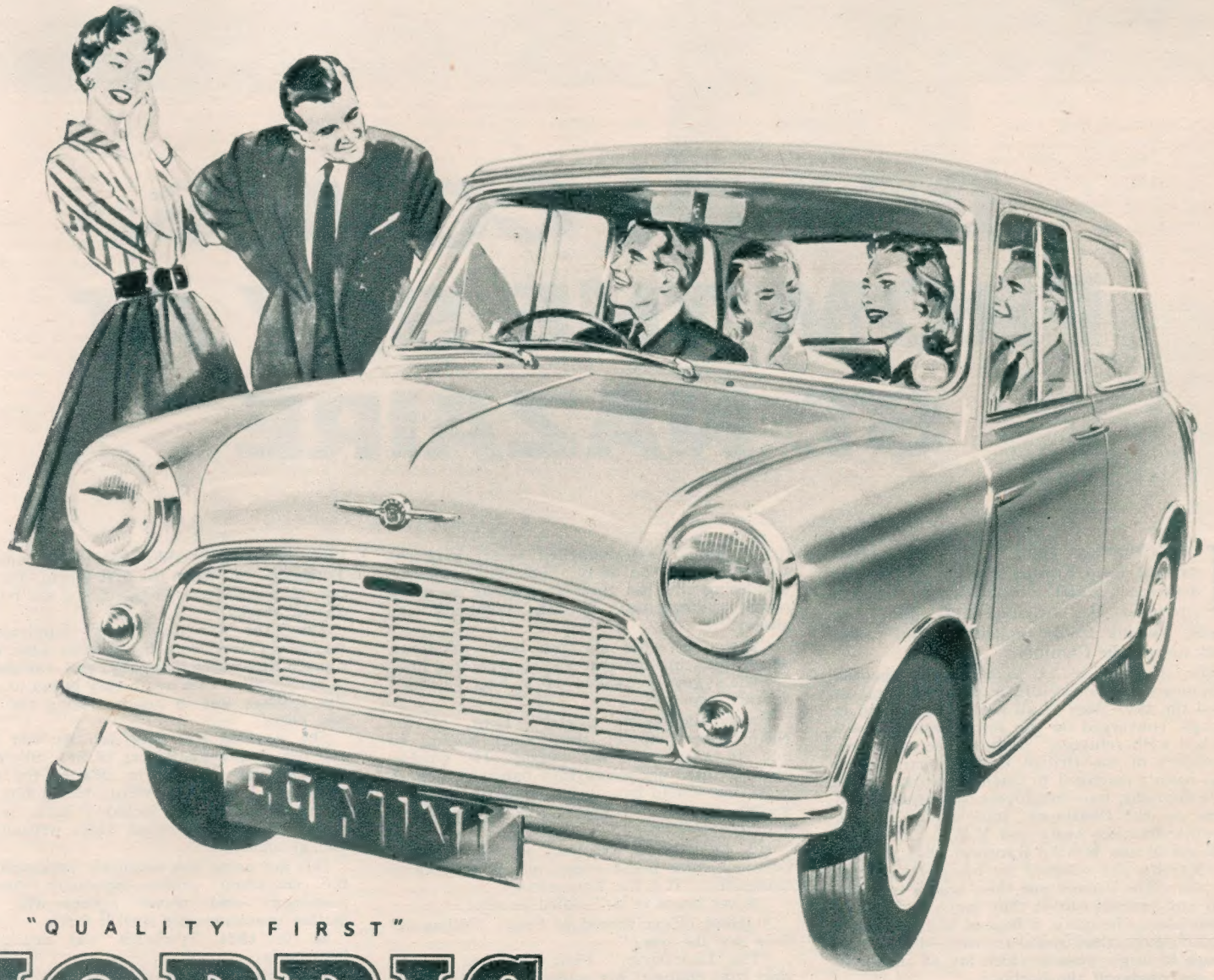
AGATHA CHRISTIE

could write—and only HERCULE POIROT could solve

CAT AMONG THE PIGEONS

BEGINS NEXT WEEK

Wizardry on wheels!



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LANCASTRIA

Beginning the heroic story

DEATH COMES FROM THE SKY AT ST. NAZAIRE

It was Monday, June 17, 1940. The great retreat from France was on. Along the western coast, bewildered British crowded the beaches and filled the ports, waiting to be picked up and taken back across the Channel.

The situation in St. Nazaire was chaotic. Ominously, the heavy drone of enemy bombers filled the sky. Men of all ranks, singly and in groups, converged on the town through roads packed with refugees. Some of the men were stragglers of the British Expeditionary Force who hadn't managed to reach Dunkirk. There were civilians, too—employees of British-owned firms on the Continent; staff of the Church Army, Salvation Army and Y.M.C.A.

Much of the R.A.F. transport that reached St. Nazaire was wrecked by being driven into the sea. The drivers put their trucks into low gear and jumped out as they moved off. Elsewhere along the quay, a fleet of boats—French tenders, tugs, destroyers, trawlers—ferried the troops to larger vessels which lay at anchor in the sea roads off the harbour.

Backwards and forwards the small craft shuttled, loading party after party, unit after unit.

Soon it was the turn of men of the Expeditionary Force Institutes, chugging out towards a distant ship, the Orient liner Oronsay. The French skipper of their tender, while allowing officers to share his bridge, treated them coldly, evidently holding the opinion of many of his countrymen that the British were running away, but he at least was doing his duty.

Then another bombing attack developed, centring on the Oronsay. With a dreadful feeling of helplessness the soldiers, crammed on the tender's decks, watched the German planes swoop and strike.

A puff of smoke and a muffled roar told the rest of the story. Pieces of flying debris scattered from the liner's bridge.

At once the tender altered course and steered for a large, single-funnelled vessel anchored about half a mile away. The men watched, wondering whether they were going to see a repeat performance, but the bombers were absent.

"I wonder what she can be?" asked an officer, glancing across to the grey-painted hull.

"She's got the shape of a liner," added another man.

Second-Lieutenant "Peter" Petit, of the Naafi, gazed up at the funnel hoping to find an answer to the puzzle. He quickly spotted three encircling iron bands, which in peacetime would have been painted black on a scarlet ground. "I know," he said. "She's a Cunarder."

His companions were not so sure. But a Cockney voice below called out as they came alongside: "It's the Lancastria."

"Never heard of it," called another.

A fellow officer turned to Petit. "What did they say she was?"

"The Lancastria," Petit answered. "The ship that changed her name."

New names—then tragedy

Change the name of a ship, so it is said, and she will meet disaster. There are cases well within living memory of changed names and subsequent tragedy. Just before the second World War, for example, the submarine H.M.S. Thetis, while out on trial, went down with a heavy loss of life. Though she was later salvaged and put back into commission, she had in the interim been renamed the Thunderbolt—much to the dislike of many sailors appointed to the crew. And as the Thetis had sunk, so did the Thunderbolt; she was lost with all hands.

From the Dalmuir yard of William Beardmore, on the Clyde, a new ship was launched on May 31, 1920. The vessel had been laid down in March, 1914, to the order of Anchor Line, of Glasgow. She was to be named the Tyrrhenia, but when the first World War broke out, all work on her stopped, and she remained on the stocks.

After the war this partly completed ship was taken over from the Anchor Line by the Cunard Steamship Company, and was the third of twelve ships with which they began to replace the tonnage lost in action during the recent war years.

She was 550 feet long, seventy feet broad, and her gross tonnage was 16,700. She carried 280 first-class passengers, 364 in the second class, and 1,187 in the third. Her public rooms were spacious, and included bars, lounges, smoke rooms, a veranda café, writing-room, and gymnasium.

But her name was definitely unpopular with the travelling public—especially American passengers and travel agents—who could neither pronounce nor spell it easily.

So in 1924 Tyrrhenia was changed to Lancastria.

With the start of the war she became a troop transport, and on June 14, 1940, had just arrived in Liverpool's Gladstone dock for a much-needed overhaul when the Admiralty ordered her to put to sea again. She sailed on the evening tide of June 15, arriving at Plymouth at daylight the next morning.

Captain Rudolph Sharp sent for his chief office, burly Harry Grattidge. "Any idea what's behind this change of plans?" he asked.

The chief officer could only shake his head. They were sailing on a blind date.

They left Plymouth that evening for Brest with another Cunarder, the 20,341-ton Franconia.

The night was quiet and uneventful, almost as if nothing could break the stillness of the sea. But with daybreak a very different scene met the sailors' eyes. They could see nothing of Brest, or even the adjacent coastline, for great volumes of heavy black smoke from

The great liner lay motionless, her decks crammed with men, women and children. Then the bomber swooped

ILLUSTRATION BY LAURENT

of the war's greatest disaster at
by GEOFFREY BOND

continued from previous page

blazing oil refinery tanks. It billowed greasily out over the sea, too heavy to be dispersed by the light breeze.

The captain stood watching for a while, then turned to his companions on the bridge. "It's no good going in there," he said, "the place is done for. We're too late."

A destroyer signalled him to steam southwards to Quiberon Bay, and the two great ships went down along the French coast together, within easy sight of the mainland.

About eight o'clock on the evening of what had been a delightful early summer day they neared their next destination. The Lancastria had by then dropped some short way astern, and the Franconia was just passing through the boom defence when a single-winged German plane plummeted from the darkening sky.

A stick of bombs fell towards the water. Hardly had they exploded before the aircraft flattened out into a low dive seawards, spraying the vessels with vicious machine-gun fire.

The entire stern of the Franconia was lifted clean out of the water by the bursting bombs. Although neither ship was actually hit, and the Lancastria in fact escaped scot-free from this first raid, the explosions sprung the Franconia's plates and put one of her engines out of line.

So there was nothing for the crippled ship to do but drop anchor and attend to her wounds, hoping that she would not be attacked again before reaching the safety of a home port. The Lancastria steamed past into the bay to await further orders.

Presently a French trawler drew alongside and called across, saying that it was a dangerous spot and advising the captain to make for St. Nazaire.

Sharp did not relish receiving similar treatment to the Franconia, so he took the French sailors' advice.

Now alone, the Lancastria sailed on down to St. Nazaire, which she reached in the very early hours of June 17. A French river pilot came alongside to bring the ship in as close as possible to the mouth of the Loire. Before long the man was up on the bridge, explaining to Captain Sharp in excellent English that it would be wiser not to continue, despite the situation which existed on shore.

"I tell you, monsieur, it will be like putting your head into a noose. The Boches have been bombing us all night, and with daylight their job will be made much easier. When they see you anchored outside, a sitting target. . . ."

The captain shrugged heavy shoulders. "What alternative have I got?" he replied, then smiled. "Thank you for the advice. And now shall we go in?"

Three-mile limit

The Lancastria dropped anchor about six o'clock that morning. Although she still lay approximately three miles from the port itself (so far out that the French coast was only faintly visible) her draft would allow no nearer approach.

The crew, looking landwards, could not see the town, nor could they hear gunfire from the approaching German army as it pushed ever closer.

There was only one other vessel in the bay at that time. The hospital ship Somersetshire had lain there all night, then, having evacuated patients and staff from No. 4 British Army Hospital, prepared with the coming daylight to steam away.

British boarding officers soon came out to the Lancastria and told Captain Sharp to stand by for loading troops almost immediately.

"How many can you hold?" the captain was asked.

Captain Sharp thought for a moment. "About three thousand—at a pinch," he said.

A naval lieutenant looked grave. "You'll have to take as many as you possibly can," he warned.

Between seven and eight o'clock the boats started to put out from St. Nazaire's quay. One of the first and largest units to come aboard belonged to the R.A.F.; Wing-Commander Douglas Macfadyen was in charge of a party of two hundred men and seven or eight officers.

Chief Officer Grattidge was making his way to the bridge of the Lancastria when the Oronsay was hit.

He saw the rigging fall, and on the ship, about half a mile distant on the starboard side, men began running. Small figures busied themselves round a lick of flame which swept momentarily up to the bridge and then was gone, dissolving in a mass of acrid smoke.

Captain Sharp stood watching. If ever a man had foreseen the future it was surely he.

Grattidge nodded across to the Oronsay which had so nearly received a fatal bull's eye. "A ruddy good job we haven't got two funnels, isn't it?" he said.

Sharp did not turn round as he replied: "Don't speak too soon." His words were carried back on the soft breeze, tinged with that first trace of smoke. "It looks as though we're going to be in for a very sticky time."

There was nothing to do but wait. . . .

An R.A.S.C. sergeant had seen, from the deck of the Lancastria, the planes which attacked the Oronsay. They came from the face of the sun, banking steeply before they dived through the golden air towards their objective.

One machine appeared to cross immediately over the sergeant's head, releasing four bombs, one of which found its mark on the Oronsay's bridge.

Then the aircraft turned, resumed formation, and made off eastwards, regaining height in the process.

"Now for it," muttered the sergeant. "They'll be back with their pals after the other sitting duck—us!"

As Leading Aircraftsman Ivor Jenkins hauled his kitbag along, following a file of his companions down a flight of steps, he felt anything but easy. So far as he could see, nothing had gone right yet. Before the war had been declared he had been with No. 2 British Air Mission in Paris.

Then came retreat, defeat—and now this.

He did not like the position at all, and his face must have shown it. "Cheer up, mate!" a member of the crew winked as he passed. "You'll be all right now. There's nothing to worry about."

"I only hope so," replied Jenkins. He wished he could share the other's optimism, and did not quite know what prevented him from doing so. After all, he had plenty to be thankful for. And he was nearly home.

Nos. 1 and 2 holds, in the very bowels of the Lancastria, were great empty storehouses, lit by electric bulbs which were let flush into the walls and protected by thick glass covers. Mattresses and palliasses lay over the floor, so close together that they almost formed a thick carpet.

Jenkins arrived in No. 2 hold, swung down his kitbag, took one look at the dismal surroundings, and decided the place was not for him. He did not mind roughing it, but there was just something about the spot. Shivering slightly, he turned back.

He had felt the hand of death. Determined to risk a court martial rather than be herded down there, he went and stood on the main deck, leaning over the rail and watching the troops coming aboard.

When Aircraftsman T. Campbell arrived he was sent down to D deck, lower aft. Finding the floor already fully occupied, the A.C.2. spotted a generator beneath a companionway and climbed on to it.

Lifebelt search

On the way down he had collected a lifejacket, which he proposed to use as a pillow. Still more men continued to crowd in on D deck, and one, looking round apprehensively, asked where the lifebelts were kept.

Campbell pointed out the locker, but the newcomer soon returned, in a state of extreme agitation, to say that it was empty, and that all the lifejackets must have been taken.

Seeing that the man was obviously very nervous, the aircraftsman gave him his own belt, and thought nothing of it. He was fully convinced that there was no danger.

Warrant Officer Jordan entered his cabin to find the other three bunks occupied by sergeant-observers of No. 98 Squadron. One man had a white Angora rabbit hopping about over his chest as he lay there dozing.

The room was quiet save for the sound of deep, regular breathing. Then from somewhere near at hand an alarm filled it with clangorous noise. Immediately the four rose and filed out into the gangway, still stifling yawns.

A steward was shouting: "It's not boat drill—it's an air raid alarm. Get back to your cabins." Hardly had they done so when a head popped round the door, glanced at the occupants, and said: "All aircrew wanted on the top deck to man guns."

The three sergeants went out, and Jordan climbed back into his bunk, determined to make the most of the opportunity for another attempt at sleep. He woke to hear an all-clear being signalled, and soon the sergeants returned.

"We got him!" one grinned. "The blighter was trying to bomb the Volturnia, but he went into the drink instead."

Colonel Gordon Wilson, of the R.A.M.C., came aboard at about eight o'clock. Finding that there was no O.C. troops, and that he was the senior officer present, he assumed responsibility for the task. Captain Frank Griggs, being unattached, was seconded as ship's adjutant. They were provided with an office, and there started to shape some sort of organization, collecting nominal rolls.

Major Jonathan Scott-Bowden, of 53 Company Auxiliary Pioneer Corps, had boarded with his men the destroyer Havelock, which was ferrying between St. Nazaire and the Lancastria. Six or

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THE DANCERS

They prink and preen before the glass
Like wagtails on a weir,
Or like the pippit in the grass
Whose mate is singing near;
Then, gathered to the barre, assume
A dedicated guise:
No laughter cheers the sombre room
Nor lingers in the eyes,
And each austere reflection takes
A muted and careful stance
Whose disciplined perfection makes
The spirit of the dance.

JEAN KENWARD

LEFT! RIGHT! RIGHT! LEFT!

Where are the Liberals marching now?

This week they plan a future in power. For at last they have found a leader who thinks he knows the way

by WILFRED GREATOREX

The Commons needs personalities, say the Liberals. They have them. At a Rochdale Liberal rally TV star Robin Day, left, talks to Moira Shearer, party-leader Jo Grimond and his fellow "glamour" candidate Ludovic Kennedy

JO GRIMOND had just finished a typical fighting speech at the Liberal Summer School, which traditionally feasts on much less militant stuff such as an academic lecture by a Tory peer on British colonial policy.

As he relaxed over a Scotch with his old friend Herbert Harris, Grimond shoved a straggling forelock out of his eyes and said: "I hope you've forgiven me for my show on TV the other night."

Harris, who is General Director of the Liberal Party, confessed that he had not seen the programme.

While Grimond had been turning in a performance of bite and charm, reducing three would-be tormentors on the B.B.C.'s *Press Conference* into little more than reluctant stooges for the most powerful piece of Liberal public relations in years, Harris and other Liberals who would have appreciated the spectacle were otherwise engaged at that weekend summer school.

"They probably," a party official told me, "didn't have a TV set handy."

Probably only in the Liberal Party could this sort of thing happen without creating antagonism; probably only in the Liberal Party could it happen at all. The Liberals now have their most determined and personable leader since Lloyd George, an inadequate and overworked H.Q. staff which depends on such a shoestring budget that it is the butt of Tory Central Office and Transport House, and a capacity for uncoordinated activity, both among the parliamentary group and local party associations, which makes even their own supporters squirm.

The party can wear its mantle of old-fashioned other-worldliness one minute, and come up with a show of up-to-date political enterprise the next. Its members include wing-collared fuddy-duddies who pine for the good old days, and wilful young radicals who are well up with the march of time.

The one constant factor in an otherwise shifting scene is Grimond's popularity among leading Liberals and the rank and file alike. "Without Jo," a party official told me, "we'd be going nowhere." Already there are signs that the party is being remoulded in his image.

At forty-six, the Fife laird's son who married into Liberalism's top family, the Asquiths, thereby acquiring Lady Violet Bonham Carter as his mother-in-law, leads the Liberals with a grace and fervour that is swelling party membership (and, more slowly, the kitty).

The shrewd hero

He is restoring paid-up members' faith in the point and purpose of remaining Liberal, and giving Lord Hailsham and Morgan Phillips a good deal more cause for concern than either of them cares to admit.

With his aggressive chin, firm mouth, humorous twinkling eyes and oratorical intensity, the Member for Orkney and Shetland has the qualities of a half-hour hero of a TV series. He has more besides—a shrewd political brain. "I always feel it's a tragedy that he's not on our side," a Labour M.P. said not long ago.

While some of Grimond's more emotional supporters are apt to develop swoon symptoms at the mention of his name—his handsome features gaze down from posters on all who enter Liberal H.Q.—party officials and M.P.s of all parties respect his political know-how. With the Liberals under fire for their vagueness, it was Grimond who first came up with practical ideas in support of the party's co-ownership policy.

At Scarborough this week the assembly will debate such real steps as the spread of shareholding among firms' employees; tax concessions to foster shareholding and saving; a legacy duty in place of estate duty to encourage large numbers of smaller bequests, and the abolition of Schedule A tax and profits tax on building societies. "A lot of this stems directly from Jo," says an official. "He seems to use his time on those long journeys to his constituency working out details of policy."

Grimond is no easy-roader. Like most M.P.s who represent constituencies with a fishing industry, he dutifully makes the odd trip with the fishermen-voters. "But he doesn't just sit in the skipper's cabin going green," says a fellow-M.P. "He gets out there on deck and does his stint at gutting."

Sometimes Grimond gives the impression that he really enjoys tough jobs such as deep-sea fishing and leading the Liberals. He certainly relishes a fight.

Those present when he packed the Albert Hall to the doors still recall the scene as he pushed back the quiff from over his right eye and suddenly exclaimed: "Liberals must give up being so excessively respectable. We've got to have some bloody noses in the party."

Reporters at the press table sought in vain for the words on their speech handouts. Grimond reacts spontaneously to big audiences and is prone to indulge in off-the-cuff oratory which sometimes worries the older end. Their world of culture, temperance in all things, unadulterated Free Trade, and humanitarianism is not exactly his.

1906 and all that

In fact, Grimond is trying to hitch the Liberal conscience to the age of public relations. He knows that namby-pamby apologists, woolly dreamers and half-cock campaigners have no place in a party fighting for its life. And he always seems to be more at home among Young Liberals than with the party executive at one of their meetings in the National Liberal Club.

Can he pull it off? Can he weld down-to-earth attitudes on to the Liberal philosophy? Can he induce the party to think less of its glorious past —1906 and all that—and to concentrate instead on the problems of the mid-twentieth century? Can he achieve some sort of homogeneity in a party with such disparate personalities as Lady Violet Bonham Carter and Lord Grantchester on the one hand and those telepoliticians Robin Day and Ludovic Kennedy on the other?

Grimond has made some headway. There is an increasing tendency to close

continued from previous page

the ranks behind him. If the party executive looks stuffy and the vice-presidential list obsolescent, membership continues to rise, Liberal trade unionists are astir, the pre-election committee under ex-M.P. Frank Byers is active, and the parliamentary candidates are a promising bunch.

If Grimond is the architect of the revival, Herbert Harris is the foreman in charge. He sets the tempo from a spacious ground-floor office in Victoria Street, London, not far from the House of Commons.

A deep-voiced economist and ex-schoolmaster who took the job six years ago when the party was just getting over the shock of its General Election lost deposits, he has a reputation for staying power and massive hard work which is borne out by his physical appearance. He has the thickset build of a rugby player, craggy features and a mop of wiry hair. He chain-smokes restlessly during conversation and tends to stub out his butts violently.

In his office, with its constituency wallmap of Britain, he can take daily stock of the changing face of Liberalism. Paid-up membership: half a million—a fivefold increase in four years. Budget: £26,000 a year—"what Morgan Phillips has for his marginal seats." New associations: everywhere—including such contrasting places as Hemsworth, a mining area, and Henley-on-Thames.

What kind of people have been joining? "Those who are fed up with the other parties," says Harris. "Mainly thinking people and young people."

'Spoon-fed Tories'

He likes to recall how he was recently approached by a group of ex-Conservatives who wanted to start a new Liberal association in their area. "They didn't know how to get going," he says. "When they were Tories they'd had everything done for them."

At present there are 218 Liberal candidates ready for battle. Five more will be chosen before the General Election. The total will not become appreciably greater.

Grimond, Harris, Byers and other leading Liberals are opposed to the luxury of putting up an electoral façade such as that erected in 1950 when many candidates were adopted in haste shortly before the poll. Today's strategy is to select a limited number of constituencies according to the quality of the candidates and the strength of the local organizations.

The primary aim is to oust Labour as the main opposition party. By-election results since 1955 suggest that this may not be as far-fetched as some would imagine. From 1951 to 1955 the Liberals fought seven by-elections and lost deposits in all but one. Since 1955 they have fought nineteen by-elections, won one, come second in seven and lost only one deposit.

There are fifteen constituencies where they came second in the General Election or in subsequent by-elections—Anglesey, Bodmin, Denbigh, Hereford, Honiton, Galloway, Inverness, Merioneth, North Cornwall, North Devon, North Dorset, Southend West, Argyll, Rochdale and Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles.

"Ten years ago," says Harris, "we had plenty of people over fifty and some under thirty, but not many in between. Now most of our candidates are in their thirties and forties." They include twenty-five barristers, thirteen lecturers, nine journalists and writers, nine teachers, three public relations officers, two estate agents, an airline pilot, an hotel director and an hotel porter, and a skilled core-maker. On the list is Robin Day, Ludovic Kennedy, John Arlott and William Douglas Home, the playwright.

There is no remorse in the party about the cult of personality which has characterized its recent activities. Both Day and Kennedy, having thrown up some of their TV prospects in the cause, nurse their constituencies, Hereford and Rochdale, with a steadfastness which certainly improves their chances.

"Of course we're interested in personalities," says Harris. "That's what Parliament needs.

"Look at the House of Commons. The country is fed up with the 'straight up and down' politicians."

Balance of power?

How many Liberal M.P.s will there be after the next election? All requests for hard predictions are regarded as slightly indelicate, but Grimond expects eighteen, Harris sixteen, and other political seers a range of numbers from two to forty. It has been suggested that Grimond wants nothing more than something he may well get—a balance of power between the two big parties. "I don't want that at all," he confided recently, "but if it does happen we know exactly where we stand."

The Liberals would do nothing to push out either a Conservative or a Labour government unless the Conservatives were to venture on another Suez or the Socialists on further nationalisation. Recently it was suggested to Harris that the Liberals were pursuing a Labour foreign policy and a Conservative domestic policy. "You could put it that way," he agreed.

Often the Liberals are criticized for knowing only too well what they are *against* and for being somewhat less clear about what they're *for*.

At present they want to stop Britain's H-bomb production; secure a permanent international police force under the United Nations; reform the trade unions and insist on secret ballots before strikes; reduce the purchase, income and petrol taxes; clip the power of the party machines; allow Scotland and Wales to run their own affairs, and do something about proportional representation.

As things stand today, the Liberal election campaign is likely to damage the Conservative Party more than Labour. According to some students of form, Jo Grimond may yet make Hugh Gaitskell Prime Minister.

To left of Labour

This tends to dispose of the theory that the real power behind the Liberals is the seventy-two year old Lady Violet Bonham Carter, D.B.E. The picture of her ladyship wielding a right-wing influence by dangling son-in-law Jo and son Mark, victor of that landmark by-election at Torrington, from her apron strings like well-trained puppets has become rather unbelievable.

"Just now," one leading Liberal says, "we're left of the Labour Party. And those who know Jo can't imagine him dancing to anyone's tune."

Grimond has taken the party a long way since the doldrum days when Megan Lloyd George and Dingle Foot took the first turning left. Just how far it has come from the old days of temperance and anti-gambling was clear in the preliminary agenda for this week's assembly.

One proposal was for a football lottery to raise party funds. Another suggested that the party should adopt a standard colour, though nobody seems to know just what it should be even after nearly a hundred years of Liberalism.

Jo Grimond may soon feel the need for more Liberal money, from whatever source it comes, as well as for a colour that is not just a muddy blend of equal parts of red and blue. THE END

Vocational Vacation

If Claude had been like other boys,
And had he been content
With simple, normal, childish joys
Each summer, when he went
To spend a week with Great-Aunt Liz
Near Harwell, maybe he
Would not, just now, be where he is—
(Wherever that may be!)

But no—he had to poke and pry
And peep and peer around
Till, feeling competent to try
Some formulae he found,
He hid in a top-secret lab
(Which should have been taboo),
Determined he would have a stab
At splitting atoms, too.

We think he must have managed it.
We think an atom must have split.
The only thing we're sure of, is
He's not gone back to Great-Aunt Liz.

GERTRUDE MONRO HIGGS

Invitation Postponed

Dear Aunt Moira.

We were looking forward to asking you over this week, but things are rather at sixes and sevens as Wilcox has set fire to a jury-box.

It was a long case about stealing crates of ear-rings and the first day his attention kept wavering, so in the evening he went into the workshop and invented a gadget. It was a disc, fixed to his leg and connected to a battery by a long flex, that warmed up unless he pressed a knob from time to time. If he dozed off it burned him.

It kept him awake most of the second day, until there was a dreadfully prosy witness who went on and on about the definition of an ear-ring. When Wilcox is dropping off to sleep he jerks, and somehow he jerked the disc off his leg and it fell on to the floor and set the woodwork alight before he noticed it. Nobody else did and he tried to stamp it out quietly, which is difficult in brogues.

Then he remembered that he had a new tube of toothpaste in his pocket and he thought of newsreels of firemen using foam so he bent down and quietly squeezed some paste into his mouth, intending to blow lather into the flames; but just then some legal point cropped up and the jury had to withdraw. He held on until they got into the jury-room, where the foreman noticed him foaming. We are so looking forward to seeing you when he has recovered from the shock.

Love to all of you—Sylvia.

R. G. G. PRICE

Job Hunter's Guide

Must have knowledge of office routine . . . *Able to make tea*
Wide scope for own initiative . . . *Boss takes three hours for lunch*
Capable of inspiring others . . . *Willing to boot slackers*
Enthusiasm essential . . . *Six-day week*
Interesting work . . . *Uninteresting work*
Young woman of good personality . . . *40-24-36*
Experienced lady supervisor . . . *Battleaxe*
Good telephone manner . . . *Able to bluff boss's wife*
Bright modern surroundings . . . *Huge windows and no blinds*
Small, quiet office . . . *Garret with no lift*
Good prospects for steady man . . . *Leave our typists alone*

E. S. TURNER

Traffic Jam

Every day
They seem to find a way
To speed transcontinental flight;
Yet every night
My journey home takes longer.
Is the traffic build-up stronger?
Or, can it be the office
Farther off is?

NOEL SCOTT

Taking Account

My wife and I save very well,
We're known for thrifty talents,
Then have a sudden dizzy spell
That makes us lose our balance.

RICHARD ARMOUR

How long should a man trust his wife—when she keeps on upsetting his alibi?

BRACEGIRDLE and the Brothers

by THURMAN WARRINER

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWIN PHILLIPS

THE morning after the Holtrigg Development Society's annual dinner in the Palatine Cinema restaurant, Inspector Bracegirdle felt a good deal under the weather and stayed in bed till ten, resenting his wife's insinuations about a hangover. An abstemious man, he suspected the Palatine's catering department, and remembered that Walter Jarrold's ulcer had been so outraged that he had gone back to his car for an emergency supply of tablets—and been quite vocal about it.

But Sergeant Strake's telephone message made the inspector forget his stomach. Old Toomey had been found dead in the canal.

Hurriedly dressing and nibbling toast instead of his customary eggs and bacon, Bracegirdle marshalled such facts relating to Old Toomey as he could remember. Once, he had farmed Gravel End, but a succession of bad years had bankrupted him, then pushed him farther and farther down till he became one of those listless, drifting derelicts to be found in and around any town, living at a hostel for men, doing any odd job that would eke out his pension.

Then about a year ago, he had come up on the pools. . . . It had been a good win—ten or twelve thousand.

Bracegirdle had talked things over with the old fellow. "Buying a house and getting married now?" he had said.

Old Toomey's reply was terse. "Don't talk daft!"

"I hear you've a couple of nephews," Bracegirdle said, more seriously.

"Walt and Burt."

"Going to live with one of them?"

"No."

"But you won't be staying at the hostel, surely?"

Toomey, a shrimp of a man with red-rimmed eyes and a bald, patched crop of stringy grey hair, shook his head.

"No," he said. "I'm taking a room. Top of Ghyll Bank Road. Next door to the Ghyll Bank Arms."

HE grinned. "All the pleasure I've had, mister, since my missus died, know what it's been, eh? Bit of bacca and a drop of beer. Not a lot, mind. . . . So what am I going to do with my money? Buy a good pipe, thirty-five bob touch, and a silver tankard to hang in the Ghyll Bank Arms. And when I go in of a night, that fat old besom'll say to the old man, *Mister Toomey's tankard, Alfred!* That'll show 'em."

And so far as Inspector Bracegirdle knew, that was all the old man had ever done with his money.

Sergeant Strake, his leathery face grim, was waiting for him. "I knew it would happen," he said. "I knew it would."

"You'd better tell me why," the inspector said, taking off his coat. "Does Jarrold know? I had dinner with him last night at the Palatine."

"Walter? I gave him a ring. He's coming down. Told me over the phone that Old Toomey was at Burt's place yesterday. Makes you think."

Bracegirdle gave the sergeant a sharp glance. "What do you mean by that?"

"Maybe nothing. Maybe a lot. You know the set-up?"

"I know Old Toomey had two nephews. Walter Jarrold is the only one I've met."

"And he was at the stuffed-shirt do last night. So that lets him out, eh?"

"Out of what?"

"I'll acquaint you, sir, with the relevant facts," Strake said with deadly formality. "Old Toomey was found dead in that lonely, badly lit stretch of the Holtrigg and Humber Navigation Canal between Ghyll Bank Road and Holt Moor Lane. Apparently he had been proceeding along the footpath which goes down through the little wood at Holt Corner, follows the towpath for a matter of fifty yards, then crosses it by a wooden footbridge and leads across two fields to the Ghyll Bank Arms."

BRACEGIRDLE knew the spot well. That footpath saved a mile and a half if you were walking from the Holt Moor district to Ghyll Banks. There was no other bridge over the canal till you reached the middle of Holtrigg.

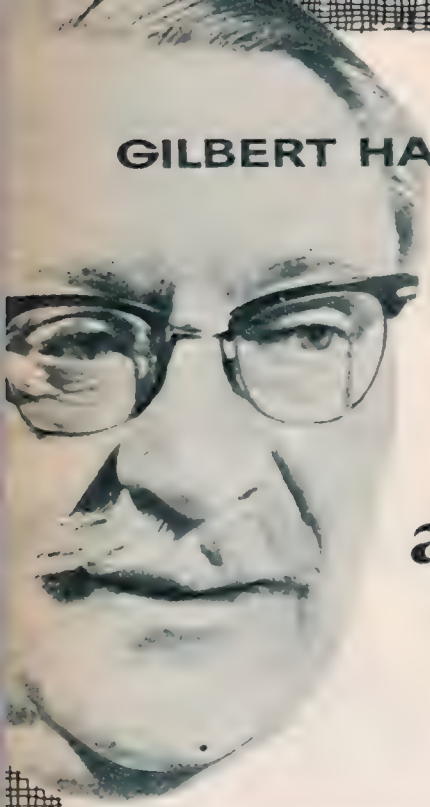
"I haven't been wasting time this morning," Strake said smugly. "Being an ordinary cop, I don't get invited to posh functions and stay in bed half the next day. Old Toomey went regular to Walter's farm on Friday evenings and Burt's council house on Tuesday. Both live in the same direction. Wherever he is, he leaves in time to reach down his tankard at the Ghyll Bank Arms prompt on half past nine."

"Is that what he did last night?"

"So Burt says. Got his cap and muffler on as it struck nine, but it was starting to rain, so Burt said he'd run

Mrs. Jarrold was persistent. "Is it true that you are going to arrest my husband?" she asked Bracegirdle

GILBERT HARDING SAYS...



We fat folk aren't such fogies

I HAVE just finished a few days' work—very hot, very hard work—in the film studios at Shepperton. Val Guest is making there a film of *Expresso Bongo* and they wanted me to play the part of a poor man's Richard Dimbleby, act as a foil to the mercurial Mr. Laurence Harvey, cope with a television panel that is up to all sorts of capers and generally be myself.

When I go filming I go for the money and to learn patience. This is by no means the first film in which I have played a bit part, but I can never get used to the lack of a sense of immediacy that there is in every film studio. Film people work under the advantage, or disadvantage, of knowing that they can always do it again. And they do. Again and again.

On a TV programme, going out live, you know you are for it, nothing further can help you, the moment the cameras come into action. I must say that I still enjoy the challenge of it. I still experience the usual, by now almost enjoyable, sensation of being about to take off in an aircraft.

In a film studio, of course, you are always being brought back to earth, made to stop, and start the whole thing again. In a day's work they produce about three minutes' screen-time; in half an hour, in a television studio, we produce half an hour.

I am surprised that television programmes are not worse and that films are not infinitely better.

Picture me, then, on a hot day at Shepperton doing an almost Dante-esque descent into what is supposed to be the "Tom Tom" Club, one of those juke-box, jiving hells of a kind I have seen in Soho but have never dared to explore.

Twitching to order

Around me are pleasant, polite youths and maidens, lolling about on the set, chattering quietly, chewing gum or just looking infinitely bored.

At a signal they spring into wild life, twitch and twitter and blow off adolescent steam with shrill cries. I am supposed to be the man from a state-of-the-nation, tut-tut kind of TV programme called *Cosmorama*.

I am supposed to be in search of the secret, "Why are teenagers rebellious?"

"How you must hate all this!" one youth said to me, meaning the *joie de vivre*, the jive.

Now doesn't that remark reveal what is so daft about the young, not only of today but of all times? Why do they assume that older, fatter folk are *bound* to disapprove?

Of course I myself would not choose a place like the "Tom Tom" for what I would call a pleasant Saturday evening out. But I certainly do not hate jive. I do not dislike seeing the young express, in whatever way they choose, the pent-up feelings we all have and which I express in far less attractive ways—in bad temper and silly tantrums.

But why assume that the whole world is against you? It is, I suppose the fault (no, the almost inevitable fate) of the young not to be able to recognize their real enemies.

When you see *Expresso Bongo* you will realize who are the real enemies of the young. It exposes all those slick sharks who do very nicely thank you out of the young pop "singers" they discover and exploit, out of the millions of gramophone-record buyers and out of that moronic minority of teen-agers who will squeal to any drum beat.

The gimmick boy

Bongo is about a boy who rockets to the top propelled by ballyhoo and a grasping agent. He has only moderate talent for singing, and he plays, not the banjo or guitar—for this boy has a gimmick—but the bongo drums. Soon the girls, even the matrons, and, of course, the agents, are after him.

When Wolf Mankowitz's *Expresso Bongo* first appeared, as a musical, he was charged, and rightly so, I thought, with sneering at too many things. (A youthful fault!)

Nearly everything and everybody took a resounding whack—the hepcats took a mighty smack, so did skiffle, so did those glutinous odes to mother love. There was a song, "The Shrine On The Second Floor" which struck me as being neither better, nor worse, than many of the "genuine" songs that mix up choirs, religion and mums. It revealed to me the difficulty present-day satirists are up against. Certain sides of contemporary life are so darned silly that it is impossible to take that further step towards the ridiculous and so highlight their folly.

All the same, I have a soft spot in my heart for Bongo. Who can know better than I, the bewilderment, the sense of panic and insecurity, that comes to anybody who has the dubious good fortune to mushroom up, overnight, into a phoney figure of public notoriety and really very little else?

Happily I was of an age, when it happened to me, not to get too big for my carpet slippers. Poor Bongo soon gets too big for his boots.

It is no laughing matter, I can tell you. THE END

continued from previous page

him back in his nineteen thirty-one sports model. Which he did, but only as far as Holt Corner."

He gave the inspector a sly smile. "The old man said he could walk from there as quick as Burt taking him round the town way. So Burt puts him down as requested and returns home. Passed to you for comment, sir."

"What d'you know about Burt Jarrold?" Bracegirdle asked.

"Fifteen years younger than his brother Walt. Married, and I wouldn't say much for his wife because she came from Smith's Wynd at the back of the brewery, and you know what a rookery that was. One child, female, three. In and out of various jobs. Short of money. . . . Did you speak, sir?"

Bracegirdle was drumming his fingers on the table. "Strake, *my* wife was born in Smith's Wynd."

The sergeant's face reddened. "I'm sorry, sir."

"You don't have to be. . . . Come on, let's take a look at Toomey, find out what the doctor says, and then have a few words with the Jarrold family."

All that Toomey's body and the doctor revealed was that he had indeed been drowned, and had probably received a violent blow under his left eye shortly before.

The inspector drove on to Holt Moor Estate, and there they found Burt Jarrold at home; he was a thin, worried-looking man in his late twenties. The house was sparsely furnished; but it was scrupulously neat and clean. The youngest Jarrold, a child with two flaxen plaits, watched with interest.

"Every Tuesday," Burt said. "Never missed. Same with Walter. He lives out at Moor Farm. The old man used to pass this way every Friday when he'd been there. And he was never more than a minute before or after nine o'clock."

"And that was about the time he was in the habit of leaving this house?"

"Every time. It was the same last night."

He nodded towards the television set in the corner. "There was a play on at nine. I told him it was starting to rain and he needn't hurry off . . . I'd run him back in the car. But he was fidgeting to be off."

Bracegirdle nodded. "Could you tell me precisely when he left?"

"About seven minutes past. Just the time it took me to bring the car."

"So he would reach the Holt Wood footpath at approximately the same time as if he had walked?"

"Just about the same."

JARROLD glanced towards the door as it opened and a girl came through. The wife from Smith's Wynd. Jarrold was nervous, ill at ease, obviously afraid of something, but the girl was very calm. Frightened, too, perhaps."

"It's the inspector, Kay," her husband said.

"I know that."

She sat on the edge of the chair, waiting. Her face was a perfect oval, serene. She was looking at Burt, smiling at him, a reassuring smile.

"There's something I ought to tell you," he said to Bracegirdle. "I've had a lot of bad luck lately."

"It was my fault," the girl said. "He had a good job, but I made him give it up."

"Why?" Bracegirdle asked curiously.

"It—it wasn't the sort of job and they weren't the sort of people who were any good to him."

"I see." Bracegirdle was frowning, and not at all sure that he did see.

Burt took up the story. "There's no point in denying it—both Walter and I have tried to get money out of the old man. Walter tried to persuade him to put the money into a bigger farm and go there to live——"

"Walter isn't married, is he?"

"No, he has a housekeeper. I've asked Uncle Toomey for money a dozen times. And last night he—he lent me two hundred pounds."

The inspector straightened in his chair. He watched the girl get up and open a cupboard.

"Here it is," she said, holding out a bundle of five-pound notes.

Bracegirdle, the wind taken out of his sails, checked the notes and gave them back to her. "You'd better keep them for the moment, Mrs. Jarrold."

She put them back in the cupboard. Strake was breathing heavily.

"When you got to the beginning of the footpath at Holt Corner, Toomey left you and you came back immediately?" Bracegirdle asked.

Burt nodded. "That's right. But it's what I'd say, anyway, isn't it?"

ON his way back to the station, Bracegirdle made three calls. The first was at old Toomey's lodgings, where a cursory search revealed nothing of interest and not a penny in cash.

Next, he went to the canal, where he closely examined the roped-off stretch of path and grass where Toomey's body had been found. Strake pointed out the two deeply indented heel-marks.

"Sudden blow, sir," he said. "The old fellow never had a cat's chance to save himself. Rocked straight back on his heels and went in."

It seemed very likely that the sergeant was right. From there, Bracegirdle went to the Northfield District Bank in High Street and had a few words with Mr. Elms, the manager.

He came to the point at once. "I'd like to know if Toomey withdrew two hundred pounds recently."

Elms shook his head. "He did not, Inspector. He hasn't withdrawn more than five pounds at any one time since he opened the account."

"That's very odd, sir."

"He was an odd man, eccentric. . . . Shortly after his windfall he did in fact withdraw *three* hundred. He said he wanted to feel that he had enough in his notecase to indulge his whim."

"I'd probably feel the same way," Bracegirdle said, thinking of the discrepancy between Toomey's withdrawal and Burt's loan. "I wonder if he's been using that money."

"I doubt it, Inspector. He was in the habit of calling every Saturday morning for a few pounds. Enough, I would say, to cover his way of living. He opened a current account with an initial deposit of two thousand pounds. The rest had been invested."

BRACEGIRDLE looked grim and felt worried as he left the bank. Only a few shillings had been found in Toomey's pockets, and he didn't think they would have overlooked a hundred pounds in the bare apartment.

If Toomey still had a hundred pounds in his possession after making the loan to Burt, and it was no longer there, was it possible that he had been robbed and killed by some person other than Burt? It seemed incredible that Burt himself would kill his uncle for the sake of a hundred when he already had two.

He was still threshing this out when Strake thrust his head through the back room door. "She's waiting for you, sir. Hasn't taken her long. Mrs. Burt Jarrold."

Bracegirdle was rarely surprised by any exhibition of human behaviour, but he was certainly surprised now. And he had good reason to be.

She was waiting in his office. For the second time, her disturbing tranquillity impressed the inspector.

"Mr. Bracegirdle," she said, "I've something to tell you.

"Uncle Toomey gave us three hundred, not two."

"Really?" He kept his voice steady. "Then why did you tell me——?"

"You mustn't blame Burt for it. It was my idea. Everyone knows Uncle Toomey used to have his back pocket stuffed with notes. Three hundred pounds in notes. I once heard him say it took him five years to save three hundred, when he was a younger man. It was a sort of. . . ."

"Symbol to him?" Bracegirdle supplied, and she nodded.

"That's it, yes. I worked it out this way—if you thought he still had a lot of money left when he went away from

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THE RED SNOWS · 2 by CHRIS BRASHER

500 feet from summit we are forced back
Sir John Hunt crashes off ice wall
We bivouac ready to attack the summit
On the descent Brasher sets off alone

Brasher was a member of the British party that climbed on Yangi-tau in the Caucasus. Below is their route

I swing in space — blind and alone

High on the Russian peak I dangled in the darkness over an icy gap. In terror I yelled to the team for help

STOCKY Alan Blackshawe, a twenty-five year old civil servant, shook me into a drowsy wakefulness. "It's two a.m.," he said. The cold gripped my hand immediately I took it out of the sleeping bag. Everything was deathly still. There was not a sign of cloud in the sky. Even the nearby stream on the mountain was silent, caught by the cold of the night.

Every sense, on that morning of July 15 last year, told me to stay warm where I was. We were about to try the Schwarzgruber Rib on Yangi-tau mountain in the Caucasus—a climb that had been done only once before, and then it had taken Bavarian mountaineers of the best prewar era three days to get to the top.

At that precise moment I didn't relish the prospect. I had been lulled to sleep by the thunder of avalanches cascading down the Bezingi Wall we were to climb. But then I reflected that even just being in the Caucasus—a playground larger, higher and wilder than the Alps—was a privilege.

We were the first British mountaineering party to visit Russia for twenty years. Four of us—Alan, Sir John Hunt, my brother-in-law Ralph Jones, and myself—were to tackle Yangi; the other five members of the team, plus two Russians, were on the neighbouring mountains of Shkhara and Gestola.

It wasn't a complicated business getting up, for I was already wearing everything except my boots and gloves, but the leather of my boots was frozen stiff. I had to knead it until it was supple enough to force my feet inside.

We made breakfast of porridge, raisins and coffee, and stowed everything we could possibly spare beneath a rock.

At 3 a.m. we were off, sliding down the moraine to a glacier and heading across this to our rib silhouetted in the moonlight. With our bodies half awake and our minds still asleep, we walked across the crisp snow, with only the crunch of our boots to disturb the quiet.

The route ahead seemed to divide itself naturally into three parts. At the bottom, the rib threw down a steep buttress of rock on to the glacier. To get on to the rib at the top of this buttress we should have to traverse to the right and make for a snow slope on its western flank. Once on the crest of the rib there was a section of mixed rock and ice. Above that, a perfectly symmetrical snow *arête* or sharply ascending ridge, steepened to a snow plateau just below the summit.

Danger in the snow

We roped up, John Hunt and Ralph Jones together, and Alan and I. Still in darkness, with our headlights reflecting a feeble light from the ice, we crossed an ice-fall and a rickety snow-bridge on to the flank of our rib.

When we reached the crest of the rib, and were safe from any avalanche danger, we sat down to a second breakfast. It was nine o'clock, and the Bavarians' first bivouac site was only eight hundred feet above us. Munching our chocolate we looked around us.

There, like a tiny speck far below us, was our bivouac site, where we had spent the night. To the east—our right as we looked out across the glacier—was Shkhara, and somewhere on that steep and icy face were our friends. To the west we were on about the same level as the Tsanner Pass which led to the almost mythical soft, green valley of Svanetia, down which we hoped to travel to the Black Sea at the end of the expedition.

Continuing the climb was hot work, and our waterbottles were already half-empty. Alan and I stuffed snow into them, strapping them to our rucksacks so that the sun could warm the aluminium and produce water.

At four o'clock, when the glacier was five thousand feet below us, we reached a little plateau which would have made a perfect place for a bivouac were it later in the day. John Hunt took the lead, over a weak bridge, up a steep ice section, and on to the snow *arête*. It was at a constant angle of forty-five

The red snows

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to fifty degrees, and we plodded on, kicking steps and moving together. Half an hour and we didn't seem to have made any progress.

Alan and I took over. Another half-hour and the *arête* still climbed ahead of us. We stopped, panting over our ice axes, beginning to feel the weariness of the long day in our legs. Unnoticed, the clouds had built up around us and there were swirling flurries of snow. Taking turn and turn about, we kicked our way up.

The light was fading. Glittering ice showed through the snow. Alan drove in another ice piton. Then, at last, we could see an ice wall ahead and the snow *arête* abutting on to it, making a simple route to the snow plateau. But we were feeling the height—15,500 feet—and we could not hurry.

At last the angle eased. We seemed to be walking on the roof of the world. The slopes fell away on either side. Far below the white ribbon of the glacier shone through a gathering pool of darkness.

I felt a strange, numb weariness. Physically I had been more tired than this, but never before had I experienced such a complete draining of physical and mental energy. It was 8 p.m. and we had been moving continuously since 3 a.m.—seventeen hours of climbing over unrelentingly difficult ground. We'd had to concentrate at almost every step.

We hacked and stamped out a platform in the snow, eight feet by seven, and left a protecting overhang under which we could put our heads. We felt completely dehydrated.

After I'd made some soup for us all, I was soon asleep, warm in my magnificent sleeping bag. In conditions like this, the bag was a precious object, weighing only just three pounds yet filled with the finest and warmest air-blown down and constructed in such a way that there were no cold spots. It was a New Zealand bag, produced by a man who had done a lot of climbing himself. The same pattern had been used on Everest.

Before leaving England I had taken one of the Everest bags into a shop that prided itself on having equipped numerous mountaineering and polar expeditions. I asked whether they could make a bag to the same pattern.

"Oh, no," I was told. "We have produced our own pattern since the first World War and it has been very satisfactory."

But their bags gave only half the warmth of my New Zealand one.

The sun woke us at 5 a.m. I still felt stiff from the previous day. The summit of Yangi was only 1,200 feet above us. Our boots were frozen solid.

It was 8 a.m. before we got away. Immediately we found that the sun had been at work on the snow which sometimes reached to our thighs.

We halted and conferred. With the snow in this condition it was obviously impractical to traverse from the top of Yangi-tau along the ridge and descend by another route as we had planned.

Throughout our ascent we had said: "Thank God we haven't got to descend this route!" But now it seemed the only safe way off the mountain.

The snow gets worse

We set off again and traversed to the left and came to a vertical ice wall. Alan, who was leading, stood on Ralph's shoulders, hammered in a piton, and then secured himself to it. The wall was only twenty feet high, but it was vertical and a long and difficult job. An hour later Alan had cut a staircase and we had ascended.

Now we had to traverse for three hundred yards to the left in order to turn some ice bulges, and then we would be on the ridge only two hundred feet from the summit. But the snow was getting worse.

Ahead was a large hole where the snow bridge had collapsed into a crevasse. I was in the lead and I traversed horizontally to get on to firmer ground before crossing the crevasse.

Suddenly I could feel the snow collapsing and I rolled away down the slope as the yawning jaws of the crevasse opened. Picking myself up, I climbed back to the edge of the hole, feeling the ice firm under my crampons. Then, sounding with my ice axe and staying on the firm lip of the crevasse, I traversed again until the snow bridge looked more secure.

It was now 11 a.m. and the sun had been on the slope for six hours. I got down on my hands and knees and tried to distribute my weight over as large an area as possible before crawling across the crevasse. Time was getting short and we had to get off this slope before any avalanches started.

John suggested that I should get up and walk, but I could hear the snow settling and groaning beneath me. Once across, I dug my ice axe deep into the soft surface, took the rope in, and then John followed.

Wumph! There was a large hole where John Hunt had been and the rope was dragging my ice axe through the soft snow. I put my whole weight on the axe but we were being irresistibly drawn towards the edge of the crevasse.

Suddenly the rope slackened and everything was still.

Alan and Ralph were thirty yards away. I yelled at them to come up and throw a rope down, and we shouted as hard as we could.

A strange, muffled voice came from the bowels of the mountain. I sat on my ice axe and took as much pressure as I could on the rope. Ralph and Alan threw a loop from their rope into the hole. Within a minute or two a snow-plastered figure put its head through the hole, and John emerged, looking like a worried Father Christmas.

We had never been happy on this slope and now we had to make a decision as to whether to go on or turn back. There seemed to be more crevasses ahead, and the snow was now very dangerous and so deep and soft that we could not move quickly. The summit of Yangi seemed to be only five hundred feet above us. We had overcome all the technical difficulties of the climb. Surely it could not be more than two hours before we were on the summit? But we were unanimous that we must turn back.

If we went on now we would only have to wait on the ridge until the evening when the snow would have a chance of compacting again. It was a bitter disappointment. Effectively we had done the climb. Complete success was so near, but the first principle of mountaineering is to be able to judge when to turn back.

Ploughing through the deep rut which we had made in the snow it did not take us long to get back to the ice wall.

Hunt crashes down

John Hunt had the awkward task of bringing up the rear and pulling out the axes after we had descended the wall. As he was wrestling with the top axe the bottom one came away. He was suddenly flying backwards, making a comfortable landing in deep snow after a fall of twenty feet.

It is something of a shock for anybody to have two falls within twenty minutes, and John was, understandably, a little dazed.

We were soon back at our bivouac platform, but here we would have to stay until the sun had left the snow *arête* below. Otherwise, we would face the danger of the whole sun-softened slope avalanching under our weight.

We ate some cold bully beef and settled down to wait for the sun to set. In the back of our minds was always the unpleasant prospect of descending the slopes which we had found, technically very hard on the way up. It is always more difficult to climb down than up.

The weather was following its usual pattern: clear and cloudless in the early morning, with mist boiling up from the valley throughout the day and clouds marching steadily northwards from Georgia. At 4 p.m. the sun was finally blotted out, and a wind, gentle at first, chilled us. We set off down the snow *arête* in rapidly worsening weather.

The sun had done its work only too well, and the surface was very treacherous. Hammering in ice pegs at the worst places, we eventually reached the snow plateau at the bottom of the *arête* at 7.30—as darkness fell. We stamped out another platform and settled down for our second night on the mountain. More tired in spirit than in body, I fell into a deep sleep.

By the afternoon of our third day on the mountain the nervous strain was beginning to tell, and our tempers were not under such good control. Certainly I had never been on such a climb—a climb during which we were entirely dependent on ourselves. There were no support parties as in the Himalayas.

A race against time

If any of us received the slightest injury, we would have to depend on ourselves alone to get down. The weather was rapidly worsening and snow was falling again. The situation was serious enough.

Alan shouted from below that he had found a likely rock rib that appeared to lead down to the glacier, but he could not see the bottom as it arched over. He hammered in a rock piton and we made a two hundred-foot abseil, as the movement is called, sliding down, guiding ourselves by means of both our ropes tied together.

Time was getting short, and we soon worked out a system: Alan went first, then while the other three were making the abseil, he prospected ahead until he found another crack to hammer in a piton for the next abseil. We wondered whether we would reach the glacier before our supply of pitons gave out.

We had one more piton left, and our lives were depending on nylon rope thinner than a pencil, when Alan shouted that he could see the bergschrund—the gap, like a crevasse, between the snow on the mountain and the glacier—and that he thought he could reach it in one more abseil. He

Russian climbers were friendly and anxious to learn from the British team. They showed great interest in equipment, and particularly in climbing boots with moulded rubber soles, which they had never seen before

Cocktail parties gave sardines a new elegance. This week scientists may discover why they are such elusive fish

The catch in your cocktail snack

by ROBERT HOLLES

SARDINES are swimming into troubled waters. A world meeting of marine biologists opened in Rome this week to discuss a question which has baffled the fishing industry for years—why do sardine catches fluctuate so alarmingly, and why is this elusive fish so prolific for one season, and completely absent from the same areas in the next?

Directly the meeting was announced by the United Nations there were protests from the Maine Sardine Council and other American interests. They complained that only the genuine sardine was to be discussed, and that other members of the same family—such as the sprat and the young herring—were to be ignored.

For a long time, the exact nature of the sardine has been in dispute. In some countries, it can mean any small fish packed in tins. In Britain, Board of Trade regulations restrict the name to the fry of the pilchard—a small silvery-blue fellow from the Mediterranean, which has an unmistakable flavour.

Sardines support major fishing and canning industries in Portugal and Morocco, and smaller ones in France, Spain, Italy and Yugoslavia.

Britain gets ninety-five per cent of its supplies from Portugal; since the British customer is very conservative, sardines from other sources are looked upon with disfavour. Imports vary according to catches, but the average is about five thousand tons a year, or 250 million sardines.

Sardines which are packed more than twelve to a tin are viewed in Britain with suspicion—so are numbers less than five. Yellow tins always sell better than tins of other colours, and so do brands which are packed *au bleu*—with the blue sides of the fish showing on top—rather than *au blanc*, with the white sides uppermost.

Recently a group of Portuguese sardine packers bought a lot of time on British television to advertise its products. The campaign made no difference to sardine sales, one way or the other.

Few housewives bother to keep sardines in storage before opening them although the fish do, in fact, mature with age like wine. "It's a crime to open a tin of sardines which has been packed less than three months," says Barry Histed, a sardine importer. "The flavour of a tin which is twenty years old is quite exquisite."

Sardines swim about in the Mediterranean in shoals which are sometimes almost as tightly packed as the tins and so huge that a sudden upward surge will send scores of thousands swirling out of the water. The shoals move around seeking feeding grounds of plankton—the tiny marine organisms on which they live—and at the same time provide meals for bigger fish and sea birds which prey on them.

Battle for survival

It is estimated that the thousands of tons of sardines hauled in a year from the Mediterranean for human consumption correspond to what is eaten by the sardine's natural enemies in a week.

Despite these depredations the sardine has a vital advantage in the battle for survival—fertility. At the age of one year the female lays 25,000 eggs. Five years later it is capable of a production of 250,000. These are laid in big clutches which float near the surface of the water—unlike those of the herring, which sink to the bottom—and are considered a delicacy by any other fish which comes along. The sardine fry which do manage to hatch are also easy prey; they are born blind, and for the first week they have no fins or mouths.

The young sardine prefers to swim in warm waters—up to twenty degrees centigrade—but as it gets older it gradually heads north towards colder seas. At the age of four or five it is found off the coast of Cornwall as a full-grown pilchard. Cornish fishermen catch about four thousand tons of pilchards annually, salt them, and sell most of them to the Italians.

This unobtrusive fish has only one method of protesting against its mass exploitation—it ups and leaves. In the early years of the century the Breton fishermen who had founded the world's first big sardine-canning industry in France found that the fish were becoming more and more scarce.

At about the same time catches of pilchards in Cornwall, which at one time were enormous, fell away almost to nothing, and hundreds of fishing families become destitute. Pilchards often disappear from the Irish coast for ten years at a time.

Twenty years ago the sardines off the coast of California supported a fishing and canning industry worth fifty million dollars a year—the largest in the United States. By 1952 the total catch had dwindled from half a million tons annually to a mere five thousand tons.

So far, the sardines have shown no desire to leave the Mediterranean.

When caught, the sardines must be canned the same day, otherwise they lose their distinctive flavour. At the canneries they are gutted and decapitated, then pressure-cooked in olive oil and packed in the cans. The fish are so fragile that most of this has to be done by hand.

And a fortune awaits the inventor who perfects a machine which will do the whole operation without breaking the sardine in pieces. THE END

swung down out of sight and Ralph followed him.

By now it was nearly dark. I still had on my dark glasses which cut out eighty-five per cent of the light. My ordinary spectacles were somewhere in my rucksack, and there was not time to stop and take them out. When it came to my turn on the rope I found myself swinging on the end, unable to see anything. I seemed to be poised over the gaping jaws of the bergschrund. Alan and Ralph were busy looking for a bridge on to the glacier, and I swung there blind and alone, yelling my head off.

It seemed an eternity before I connected with some rock and clung to it like a blind bear.

Then at last we were on the glacier, stumbling in the darkness across blessedly level ground.

An hour later we reached our bivouac site beside the moraine. There were our spare rucksacks with food, fuel, and a note from some Ukrainian mountaineers we had met several days previously.

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Dear Friends!

Good day and congratulation you with a tent on the mountain in region of Bezingee.

Exquze us for many quantity of mistakes. To day we are going on Kroomcol and Misgezgi. Good luck and good wishes for you.

The group of Ukrainian alpinists.

The only worry left was that we were due back at the base camp, from which we originally started, and where several Russian teams climbing in the area were based, at 9 a.m. the next day. At all costs we had to tell the Russians of our return well before then to stop them from even starting to organize a rescue.

Brasher goes alone

We had four hours' sleep, and after a quick breakfast, I went on ahead. I stripped off as many clothes as I could and cut across an area of tangled ice, over the moraine, and on to a meadow. The grass seemed as restful as a feather bed to my eyes after three days of nothing but grey rock and white snow. The smell of the flowers was everywhere. I buried my face in the lush, scented greenery. It was cool and fragrant.

I made good time, taking two hours for a section that had taken us five hours on the way up. Just before seven I came out at the top of the moraine and looked down on to the camp.

The Russians pumped my hand. They were grinning all over their faces. It was like Paradise to be on the grass, warmed by the sun, and drink endless mugs of tea without having to worry any more about the weather, or the route, or the snow, or the food supplies, or the amount of fuel left. All morning I just lay outside the tent.

Occasionally Russian climbers would file past our tent and be welcomed at their camp with the formal little ceremony: "Welcome to the conquerors of such-and-such a peak."

Then, with a great shout: "Welcome! Welcome! Welcome!"

In contrast, our party shambled in at intervals to be casually welcomed with a cup of tea.

I strolled over to the Academy of Sciences camp and talked to Alex Baldin, a very experienced Russian mountaineer, who was suffering from bad sunburn as a result of a training climb. He and his companions were preparing for a new climb on the north wall of Khrum-kol, a wall which Alex said was five thousand feet high and at an angle of seventy-five degrees. It sounded formidable, and they were waiting until everyone was fully fit.

Alex was an interesting individual. In December, 1957, he went to Birmingham University under an exchange plan to do some research in theoretical physics. He found it hard going to begin with, but his English rapidly improved. He was impressed with the friendliness shown him and thoroughly enjoyed his stay in England. Now he was back in his favourite area, the Bezingi, preparing for this new and difficult route on Khrum-kol.

While we were having breakfast next morning, July 20, our party returned from Shkhara: George Band, who was a member of the 1953 Everest Expedition; Mike Harris, a slight, dark-haired research physicist from Wolverhampton, undoubtedly one of Britain's leading rock-climbers; Derek Bull, a London insurance executive; and the Russian in the party, Anatoli Kustovski.

They had great news—they had climbed their route in spite of the weather—but were weary. Like us, they found their climb more serious than anything they had done before, and

The red snows

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George Band included in this his Himalayan and Andean experiences. They were constantly worried by the weather and the cold. Worse than anything was the thirst. Their hands were in a poor state from being constantly plunged into the soft snow. They lay about like skeletons drained of all energy.

That day we had disturbing news on the radio which the Ukrainian party had set up to receive the weather reports. Nuri El Said had been murdered in Iraq, and American troops had landed in Lebanon.

"Why this aggression?" asked the Russians. But we could only shrug our shoulders and wonder whether or not the whole of the Middle East—not so far distant from us, for on a clear day one could see Mount Ararat from the top of the Bezingi Wall—was about to blow up.

"We will help you to escape into Turkey," joked some of the Russians. "And if we fail, there is enough climbing in Siberia to keep you happy for twenty years."

But it was not as funny as that. The Middle East was an area that could cause real trouble between East and West. And here were we, an isolated party, deep in the heart of Russia.

That evening one of the Russian camps invited us to supper. They had taken a great deal of trouble. Their largest tent had been cleared out, and down the centre was a wooden plank. On this rested candles and a steaming tureen of borshch, the truly magnificent Russian soup which is a meal in itself. After the borshch there were more tureens of meat and potatoes, then pineapples and cream.

We discussed mountains and mountaineers the world over, and we argued fervently whether or not mountaineering was the most intellectual of sports. Certainly, we agreed, it is the least competitive.

With bellies full and revelling in the physical and mental satisfaction that comes of good climbs accomplished, we sat outside the tent around the flickering candles while the Russians sang to a guitar. The mist had crept up the valley in the darkness and now encircled us. The candles threw up ghost-like shadows as we sat leaning against each other, Russian backs on English knees.

Here, we were happy in our friendships and our common interest. Russian and English, we lived together and climbed together. We were happy in our primitive existence. Our friendships were secure. But the radio troubled us. World events could smash those friendships.

Three sick men

All next day we again lay about the camp, restocking our bodies with food and water like camels and our spirits with idleness. Our party was much depleted. Ralph Jones had a poisoned cut on his ankle; Derek Bull and John Neill—who with Dave Thomas and a Russian, Eugene Gippenreiter, had climbed Gestola—both had huge raw blisters. Dave felt that he was too slow and would be an encumbrance.

But George Band and Mike Harris were still strong and fit, and they were obviously after a new route. We all wanted to climb Dych-tau. Its first ascent had been made by an Englishman named Mummery in 1888 when it was still considered to be, after Elbrus, the second highest mountain in Europe. George and Mike decided that they would like to attempt the unclimbed south rib.

John Hunt, Alan Blackshawe, Eugene Gippenreiter and myself felt that the original Mummery route would suit our capabilities.

It was now Monday, July 21, and we had to be back in Moscow by Wednesday the thirtieth at the latest. We believed that if we took about four days for our climb and returned on Friday the twenty-fifth we should then have time to cross the Tsanner Pass on Saturday and Sunday and drop down into Svanetia.

From Svanetia it would be possible to reach the sands of the Black Sea for two days' recuperation before flying to Moscow and so home. But this journey would cut us off, even more thoroughly, from civilization. Some of us felt it would not be wise to commit ourselves until we knew more about the situation in the Middle East. One of the Russians from the Academy of Sciences camp was returning next day to the big Spartak Mountaineering Camp where we had stayed on arriving in the Caucasus. John Hunt wrote a cable for him to send to the British Ambassador in Moscow, asking for advice.

Climbing the following morning, we had a quick lunch at a bivouac site on the moraine. The weather was getting worse. The noise of thunder mingled with the growls of avalanches from the Bezingi Wall. At times we had to shelter under boulders from the heavy rain and snow. After climbing another 1,500 feet into thick mist it seemed wisest to bivouac. We constructed a platform, John Hunt and Eugene preferring a rock surface and Alan and I a snow bed.

Poisoned by water

It was my turn to fetch the water. A short distance away I found a small stream trickling under the snow. In between filling the water bottles and cooking pots I drank a few mouthfuls. While filling the last pot I found black flecks in the water and thought it might be biotite, a mineral of the mica group which acts on the stomach like glass. The biotite would, we hoped, settle to the bottom of our bottles and pots.

By eleven o'clock during the following morning's climb I was regretting those mouthfuls taken direct from the stream. I felt so sick that I was delaying the party. I asked them to leave me and go on as a rope of three.

They did so, but returned a few hours later. The weather was threatening to get even worse every minute, and Alan said he thought life was too sweet to venture on such dangerous ground.

During the descent we met three Russian parties, one of which was going to attempt the Muller rib on Shkhara which George, Mike, Derek and Anatoli had done the previous week. They greeted us with typical kindness and insisted that we shared their supper.

Two of the Russians were killed on Shkhara a day or two later.

Still weak from my stomach trouble, I made slow progress down the moraine. On the left, the rib up which we had climbed on Yangi looked like a delicate buttress placed there to prevent the summit from crashing on to the glacier. It still looked a ferocious, frightening climb. Yet I knew we had mastered it and could do so again. My confidence was increased a little. I wondered how Mike and George, two supremely confident and competent mountaineers, were faring on this, their second day on Dych-tau. If anybody could bring the climb off, they could.

At our base camp there was disturbing news. Apparently Kruschev had delivered an ultimatum and suggested a summit meeting that week. We certainly could not move until George and Mike were back. And some of us disliked the idea of cutting themselves off from the rest of the world by crossing the Tsanner Pass into Svanetia.

At four o'clock the next afternoon, though, the ambassador's reply came on the radio. He advised us to stick to our plans. The situation in the Middle East could not be as serious as we had imagined. The relief was immense. Three of the party wanted to join those of us who were going over the Tsanner Pass into Svanetia.

We were up early in the morning, packing all our kit and striking the tents ready for departure. It was a glorious day. The sun warmed our bare backs. But there was a tenseness

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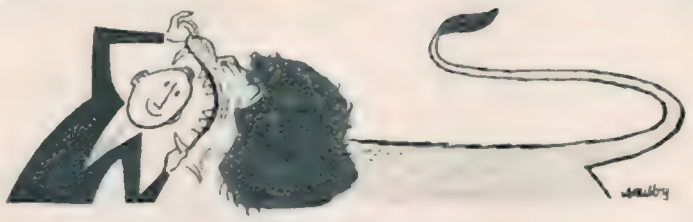
Now the spotlight is on Ike and K. But in the search for peace Dag Hammarskjold knows that his turn is bound to come

The man in the shadow of the Big Two

GETTING TO KNOW YOURSELF



Are you courageous?

Answer these questions, set by a doctor, and see if you are courageous. Decide what you would do rather than what you think you ought to do. Answer quickly and don't have second thoughts about it.

1. A vague acquaintance, whose reputation for unreliability is well known, approaches you for a loan of £5. His story sounds true. You have the money to spare, but you don't want to help. Do you

(a) apologize that you are too hard up to help?
(b) grudgingly lend him the money?
(c) tell him frankly that you don't intend to help a non-payer like him?

2. You see an obviously strong and pugnacious man ill-treating his dog. Naturally you tell him to stop. Other passers-by stop to watch when the man threateningly tells you to mind your own business. Do you

(a) stand your ground, confident that he's bluffing?
(b) walk away?
(c) ask the people standing around to help or get help?

3. You're on holiday in Switzerland. On a mountainside, near a ravine, you see some eidelweiss growing a foot from the edge. You came up here for these flowers. Do you

(a) walk to the edge and pick some?
(b) crawl on hands and knees until you can reach out and grab a few of the nearest flowers?
(c) walk on, telling yourself that you'll find some more in a safer place?

4. At a party where you know only your hosts, you find that all the guests have different political views from yourself. A discussion about local politics begins. Do you

(a) assert your viewpoint?
(b) keep quiet?
(c) pretend to have the same views as the others?

5. On last summer's chilly summer holiday you decided to bathe despite the weather. The sea was cold. Did you

(a) walk in slowly so as to get used to the coldness gradually?
(b) paddle around the edge and then decided to wait for a warmer day?
(c) plunge straight in to get the shock over quickly?

6. At a bus stop someone elbows his way into the queue ahead of you. Do you

(a) demand that he goes to the rear?
(b) silently shove him out of the way?
(c) keep quiet knowing there'll be room for all?
(d) grumble to the person behind you about some folk's manners?

7. Most people fear snakes. Whether you do or don't, do you think that this fear

(a) is a sign of nerves and cowardice?
(b) is reasonable because many snakes are poisonous?
(c) originates from the Garden of Eden story showing that snakes are evil?

8. On current problems, widely discussed in the papers and on TV, such as capital punishment, the H-bomb, the colour bar, and so on, do you

(a) tend to feel that the majority is always right?
(b) find your views changing through propaganda?
(c) have views which are fine in theory but difficult to practise?
(d) feel bored about such big and vague topics?

9. There's a household bill much overdue and your creditor demands an explanation for the delay. You can't pay just now. Do you

(a) write or telephone your excuse?
(b) ask for a personal interview to explain your predicament?
(c) let things slide until the creditor takes action legally?

10. You see a door-to-door salesman approaching your house with a case full of household brushes you don't want. Do you

(a) pretend you're out and let him knock till he's fed up?
(b) open the door and tell him firmly you don't want anything?
(c) get rid of him by buying the cheapest item he offers?

Now turn to page 32

continued from previous page

cautious but fast-flying diplomat; as the practical, ultra-precise office administrator; and as the intellectual private citizen who, like a male Greta Garbo, seems just to want to be alone.

His favourite sport is climbing and walking, and when time allows he gets in as much as he can at the 150-acre country home he rents in Brewster, New York (a luxury he can afford from his £19,000-a-year tax free allowance). He has often said that the world today needs the qualities of the mountain climber: "Perseverence and patience, a firm grip on realities, careful but imaginative planning, a clear awareness of the dangers but also of the fact that failure is what we make it, and the safest climber is he who never questions his ability to overcome all difficulties."

This is Hammarskjold's creed, and he has been acting on it ever since his first important mission in January, 1955. On that occasion, he went to Peking to try to secure the release of eleven American airmen held in Communist jails, whose continued detention was causing growing tension between the United States and China.

When he returned to New York he made a lengthy statement, with no hint that he was optimistic about securing the men's freedom. Only several months later, after the men had been released, his personal assistant, chauffeur and bodyguard, William Ranallo, disclosed that Hammarskjold had walked smiling from his last meeting with Chou En-lai and said: "Well, we've got them out."

First big triumph

It was an important triumph for Hammarskjold, for not only were the Americans pleased but so were the Chinese. A communiqué from Peking said: "The secretary-general's negotiations were most satisfactory as far as the premier was concerned."

It was also a first taste of Hammarskjold's highly individual method of negotiating. In all his discussions he has the knack of making his listeners feel that he is sympathetic towards their problems. But he makes it clear that he can see merit in the other man's view, too.

"Being neutral," he once explained, "is not a question of saying 'yes' to both sides but of saying 'no' to both sides."

A Canadian diplomat described the effect of this technique. "You sometimes spend twenty minutes with him and leave his office quite happy," he said. "Then, when you start to think about the talk you wonder just what he really said."

Despite this he is not weak, nor does he change his mask for every country. Within the sanctuary of his own office, he can be outspoken and blunt. The lash of his tongue was felt by British and French delegates during the Suez crisis in 1956. Similarly, he vented his feelings against the Russians over the Hungarian bloodbath.

In all this, he has not been free from criticism. On specific issues he has been accused of bias and of adhering too rigidly to the letter of the U.N. Charter. He has also been attacked for trying to assume too much authority.

Last year, Sir James Hutchison, a former under-secretary in the British War Office, challenged the wisdom of giving Hammarskjold so much rope. "We must realize that we are relying on the judgment of one man," he said, after the secretary-general had intervened in the Lebanon crisis.

Some of Hammarskjold's critics protest that he is getting too cocky. They note that in his early days, in fact for most of his first five-year term, he acted basically as an administrator—as a servant of the United Nations. More recently, however, he has acquired a far bolder concept of his position.

Even his critics concede that he is a dedicated man and a tireless worker. He likes his job, even though he does not like being a celebrity. He avoids parties and shuns all attempts to drag him into the New York social whirl.

Those who know him well say that he has a great eye for detail. "In fact," said one of his secretaries, "there are times when, like many a bachelor, he is too fussy, too precise." He worries about the literary styles used in United Nations publications, gets upset if assistants disturb anything in his office.

One permanent sign of this meticulousness is a pencil mark on the frame of one of his windows. That is where the venetian blind must rest—no higher, no lower.

Even when the world is taking a sporadic vacation from trouble, Hammarskjold's day is always a busy one. He rises early and works through until 8 p.m. or later, with only brief breaks for food.

At night, there is nothing he likes better than to go home and read. He is fond of poetry, particularly T. S. Eliot's, and as a member of the Swedish Academy—and a Nobel Prize judge in literature—he must read all the world's most important novels.

His appreciation of modern art can be noted by anyone calling at the United Nations building. All around are notable works on loan from New York's Museum of Modern Art. Most of them have been hand-picked by Hammarskjold himself.

His dedication to his work has won him respect rather than affection. Even his under-secretaries, Andrew Cordier and Ralph Bunche, call him "Mr." to his face, though to most of the U.N. staff he is "Dag" behind his back.

He took his office at a time when morale in the organization was low. His predecessor, Trygve Lie, a rough-and-tumble Norwegian politician and trade unionist, had lost the confidence of some nations and there was a general fear that the United Nations was on the verge of crumbling.

Immediately he was sworn in, Hammarskjold set about restoring morale. He made a personal tour of the building, shaking hands with all four thousand employees. And, using his training as an economist, he hacked into the United Nations budget, lopping more than a million dollars off the first year's expenditure.

"He's a fine administrator," says Under-Secretary Cordier. "I put his achievements down to his vast capacity. He is an expert in so many fields, from music and drama to politics and economics. He is always in command of a situation."

This, Hammarskjold has proved in many ways. In New Zealand, he showed that he was better informed about local mountain flowers than his host, a prominent amateur botanist. In a Damascus museum, he surprised his guides by identifying all the ancient inscriptions on view.

His private hopes

Such erudition justifies the pride of his father, who was Prime Minister of Sweden during the first World War. "If I were as brilliant as my son Dag," the elder Hammarskjold once said, "I might have gone far."

Hammarskjold has gone far, though it is a safe guess that privately he expects to go farther still. Overshadowed for the time being by the meeting of the Big Two, he still sees himself as the peacemaker of the mid-twentieth century. He is quietly convinced that when the international leaders have finished shouting at each other across conference tables, they will decide that there are better ways of solving their problems.

He feels that the world has not yet had a sufficient look at his version of "quiet diplomacy"—a phrase which he now wishes he had never coined, since it is repeated around United Nations headquarters with the deadly monotony of a television commercial.

Hammarskjold recently reaffirmed his faith in the methods he has chosen. "Some day," he said, "the United Nations will come alive in the consciousness of men, and it will not be as the result of international advertising slogans."

At this, one French diplomat remarked: "If Hammarskjold has his way, peace will come so quietly that nobody will know it is here." THE END

TV has its eye on you

by KEITH ELLIS

Television's snoopers pry right into your home. They know your hopes and fears, when you brew tea, lose your temper . . . and even go to bed

RECENTLY, a television programme company wanted to test public reaction to a crime series it was thinking of running. Before the broadcast, it showed the first instalment to a selected audience.

The story was about a lorry driver who left his silver-wedding party to take his truck on a night run. He was held up by bandits, but he outwitted them, saved his valuable cargo and returned to the party, which was still going on.

At forty key points in the story, researchers, using a secret method, measured the level of interest of each member of the audience. As would be expected, the men were more interested in the hold-up than in the domestic scenes at the party. And the women were more interested than the men in the domestic scenes.

But even among the women there was a greater interest in the scenes of violence than in the homely passages.

This final discovery was no surprise to the programme company. It merely confirmed a suspicion that they had had all along. Like their rivals, they had recognized the fact in their choice of programmes.

While plays and serials of purely domestic interest are rarely seen in this country, Western, crime and adventure series take up increasingly more television time.

Ted Whitley, A.B.C. Television's head of research, recently made the point when he gave a lecture on television audiences to a group of parsons.

"Women," he said, "enjoy Westerns as much as men. They also like crime series—especially if there's a handsome detective."

He had been telling the parsons about the extraordinarily detailed study that the programme companies and research organizations had made of their audience.

To help them to win more viewers they spend hundreds of thousands of pounds a year studying the hopes and fears, the weaknesses and hidden aspirations of the millions who look in.

They have found that the audience likes to escape from its grey, workaday world to one that is emotionally more satisfying. Hence the popularity of the adventure series.

Of the Top Ten programmes listed by Television Audience Measurement, Ltd., for the London region in the week ending August 23, 1959, four were crime or adventure series. Another five were quizzes, varieties or other types of light entertainment. "At any point in time," said Whitley to the parsons, "there will be more people who want to be frivolous—whether it's a collection of dockers or of Oxford dons."

Nobody appreciates this better than the B.B.C. Last March, ITV put on Thornton Wilder's play, *The Skin Of Our Teeth*. It was Vivien Leigh's first major television performance and had been given expensive publicity.

Its prospects looked good—until the B.B.C. scrapped its previously advertised programme and announced that while the play was running it would put on an ancient Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers film, *Follow The Fleet*.

When the two shows went on the air, a large majority of the total audience had its sets tuned to ITV. Then began a mass desertion. When the shows ended, two-thirds of the viewers able to choose had tuned to Ginger Rogers.

'We told you so'

Sidney Bernstein, head of Granada, the company which had produced *The Skin Of Our Teeth*, was so angry that he accused the B.B.C. of unfair competition. Other television men laughed up their sleeves and said "we told you so." They have long held the view that anything connected with "culture" dies the death, although in public they protest that they put on programmes of minority appeal as a public service.

Audience research has given the programme companies the most minute information about the television audience. They know that fishermen and tennis-playing women are not likely to have sets; that golfers almost certainly are. For some reason, non-smokers are particularly attracted to swimming programmes.

Much of this information, fascinating in itself, is no great help in getting and keeping viewers. More useful is a knowledge of the changing composition of the audience in terms of social class.

As Whitley explained to the parsons, there is a predominance of shop and factory workers up to about 8 p.m. because they come home early from work. By 8.30, office and professional workers are also looking-in.

After ten, the shop and factory workers begin to drift off to bed because they have to get up early. The office and professional workers—who start work later—continue to view. This is reflected in the timing of programmes. The more sophisticated ones are shown after 10.30 p.m.

In their constant struggle to attract viewers, the programme companies have many factors in their favour. "In most homes," says Whitley, "there's nowhere to move to if you don't want to view. If one of the family wants to watch, they probably all will."

Then again, habits—once formed—are difficult to break. "We find," says Whitley, "that people go on watching long after they've lost interest."

On the other hand, some members of the family will not be paying too much attention to the set. In a recent large-scale survey of viewing habits, anthropologist Geoffrey Gorer discovered that one in four of the audience ate their evening meal while viewing.

During the rest of the evening, two women out of three knitted or sewed while watching and a quarter of the men either read or dozed off.

Such a situation spells danger for the programme company. "If there are three programmes in a row which appeal only to Mum or Dad," says Whitley, "someone is going to get irritable and switch off or tune to the other channel."

Hence, programme contractors try to vary their shows in such a way that a majority of the family will not be too bored. In this they are often successful. The 7,354,000 homes with sets capable of receiving both B.B.C. and ITV keep their sets on for an average of thirty-five hours a week in winter, rather less in summer. On average, they tune to ITV for more than two-thirds of that time.

Nothing, however, can keep viewers watching commercials. Most people dislike them.

According to a recent Gallup Poll, almost half were "annoyed" by them when they came at the end of a programme. When they came in the middle—during a break which more than half thought was contrived—they annoyed more than four-fifths.

Tell-tale water

Recent evidence also suggests that people often don't even see them. Graphs kept at the waterworks of the Metropolitan Water Board continuously record the water pressure. Engineers have noticed that pressure falls sharply after a popular programme.

This can only mean that large numbers of people have nipped out to make a cup of tea or to go to the lavatory.

Advertisers had always assumed that the best place for a commercial was next to a highly popular programme when large numbers were looking-in. Now it seems likely that the more irresistible the programme, the more loath people are to leave the room while it is on—and the more eager they will be to do so when the commercials appear.

Programme companies admit the problem, but for obvious reasons try to play it down. Pending a solution, they pursue the policy which has already brought them a large and growing audience.

One rule is never to frighten viewers. Recently, scriptwriters gave one of the characters in a serial a serious nervous disease. When two other characters discussed it, they mentioned that the sick person would never recover.

Next morning a letter arrived from a man whose wife suffered from the same illness. She had never been told that it was incurable and was naturally shocked when she found out while viewing.

The producer of the programme got in touch with his scriptwriters. In the next instalment the sick person was again discussed—but this time it was hinted that, after all, there was hope of a recovery. THE END

They had a strange secret, these women
And we were determined to

THE GOLD OF DELILAH

by OLAF RUHEN

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

DELILAH is the craziest airfield in the world! It must be. Every trip I made there I decided that. Flying from the New Guinea coast you left the bare ridges where only the *kunai* and the kangaroo grass grew, and crossed directly over an area of high-country tropical rain forest, low steep hills and ridges, towards a range that was only about six thousand feet high, but fairly even, unbroken by cross valleys, and a real barrier.

Well, you came to the crown of the range, and as you passed over it you looked down to check the strip. It lay on the steep slope of the other side, and the moment you were over it, you banked to starboard. My old Dragon used to do it automatically. If you didn't bank you ran into the range ahead, which was close, and high.

Then you flew down the valley and over a cross-ridge, made a U-turn to starboard, and as you came over the cross-ridge again you cut the throttles and dropped into a little valley. And then you gunned the engines to land uphill at a fair sort of an angle. After the first three hundred yards the strip levelled out; but there were only a couple of hundred yards left for the landing run, and then you hit the forest, if you were still going, and the timber stacks.

Taking off with a load was a little harder, because of the downhill run ending in a gully, and the ridge on the other side of it, but I could have done it in my sleep, I think, although it frightened strangers. And you do get the odd strangers in Delilah. Like the man I had flying with me one special day that I'm remembering.

His name was Tully, and I couldn't make him out. He said he was a student, but he didn't say what he was studying. He was dressed in shirt and shorts, good boots and an old felt hat, and he carried a pack. And he asked the wrong questions—for a student.

Delilah—Delilah was my home town, if you can visualize a home town consisting solely of one sawmill, one gold-sluicing claim, one native store, two rows of about a dozen one-room huts for single men, and the McGinnis house, where Judy lived.

There were barracks for the native labourers who worked on the gold claim and in the mill, and the usual surgery and hospital, and storehouses. But the barracks, like the huts, were mostly empty by this time; and the labour walked in from the village less than a mile away on the crest of the hill.

Old Stamford McGinnis was losing his grip. He sat on the veranda nearly all the time now, not able to move around much, and Judy ran the place. At one time he wouldn't have anything but Sepik labour, but now he was saving recruiting fees and transport by training the local boys, and they made up to a shiftless and rascally crew. He got them from Animoa, who kept the store; a fast-talking go-getter of a native who practically ran the district like a chief of the olden times; and I had as much time for Animoa as I have for widow-swindlers, although I could have done with his trade.

That's all you'd see in Delilah; that, and the blaze of poinsettias against the vivid green of bananas that made an avenue of the road that wandered amongst the rain-trees from the airstrip to the claim. But for me Delilah was the place where Judy walked, and Judy made the tropic colours take the background when she moved.

She was there when we landed, standing tall and straight near the stack of oildrums and tarpaulins which was the nearest thing I had for a depot; and Tully stopped in the doorway when he saw her. He had heard about her, I knew, because she had figured in his questions, but he wasn't prepared for her. I didn't blame him for admiring her. I couldn't blame him for being surprised, because that's the way of it. Plenty of girls could answer her description—beautiful dark hair with a wave in it, laughing blue eyes and smiling lips, tall and slim and a pretty figure—but only Judy had them put together like that.

I introduced them. "This is Robert Tully. He's a student of anthropology."

"Ornithology," Tully corrected me. "My interest is birds, officially."

"I don't know how long he's staying," I went on. "I told him I thought you could probably put him up in some of the empty quarters."

"It's a little indefinite, I'm afraid, Miss McGinnis," Tully said. "Possibly two or three weeks. Quite a rough survey and very little field work is what I had in mind. A little original observation—and a good deal of checking with the native population."

I thought of those questions again, and I still felt they were the wrong questions, but I had my own problems.

And anyway I had to leave them there and spend a week in Lae on a thousand-hour overhaul.

It was a good time to go, because the McGinnis sluice was cutting into a new paddock; and they had high hopes of a good return, because it was the continuation of an area where Stamford, in earlier years, was getting a steady twelve grains to the ton; coarse gold, with frequent nuggets, and little pockets where the metal was in surprising concentrations.

But bad investments had laid McGinnis low, and he had capitalized on the gold still in his claim by forming a public company. From that time on his success had dwindled; and the sawmill represented a rather frantic effort to cover the running costs of the claim and keep faith with the shareholders. It also provided me with my best freights, but the McGinnis Company's account was a little overdrawn with me too. I wouldn't have minded except that I had to pay my own bills; and with all the work and worry falling on Judy I didn't like the situation one little bit.

When I came back the news was still bad. I had pegged the Dragon down for the night although it was still early in the afternoon; and Judy was sitting on a low stack of timber, waiting for me. We walked a little way down an old logging road while we talked, and sat down on a stump in a clearing overlooking the creek.

"Dad must have sunk his prospect holes smack in the middle of the richest samples in the field," Judy was telling me. "What we're turning up now won't pay expenses. We're just about the bottom of the barrel."

Even when she was tired and disappointed she was lovely; and I suggested, not for the first time, what I was sure was the best way out of her difficulties. She gave me the sweetest smile in the world and reached out and put a hand on mine.

"I'd give a lot to be able to say yes," she said. "I'd marry you in a minute, Alan, but I can't. The mine must pay, and that's that. Daddy made his promises to the shareholders—and Daddy isn't much use any more. I must hang on, Alan. And I must make Delilah find the money somewhere. You can't help me. If you took over—you'd have no more chance of finding gold than I have. And your own business would crumple, and then you wouldn't be flying any more, and you'd be sorry. And Delilah without transport would close up too."

I looked away from her, out across the stream. A long file of women were coming out of the forest. They came as far as the bank and sat down, resting their heads from the weight of the goods they were carrying in their head-nets. I knew them: they were Animoa's wives—all thirty-four of them—and they were bringing up his goods from Lae, seven days' walk.

They were dressed in bunchy grass skirts in four colours—old gold and dark rose and brown and charcoal; and the head-nets. A few of them wore necklaces. Three of them had another head-net above their main load, and these, I knew, carried cradled babies.

"Looks as if our only chance now is in the timber," Judy was saying. "If we could step up the shipments. . . ."

I'd have done it if I could. But I was getting only back-loading prices for the timber—it saved me running empty. As a matter of fact the prices were a little too low. It was the right price to let the timber compete with the stuff the big companies flew down in big transports from Bulolo but it only covered running expenses. If I had to reverse the flow of trade and run empty to Delilah I was sunk.

The women were in the stream now, wading up to their armpits, feeling carefully for a footing in the mad rush of white water. There were rolling stones in that stream that must have bruised their feet, but they didn't seem to feel them. They were laughing and calling to each other, just keeping their loads dry. They did it every month. Or more often.

"There's the answer," I said to Judy. "That's the make-weight I need. Store-goods. I can carry them cheaper than Animoa's Marys. Three-quarters of their load is rice, so that they can feed themselves on the road. Animoa could put them to work and get something valuable from them. I've told him and told him—you think he'll listen?"

"The old devil," Judy said. "It's not just because he's conservative. He's shrewd enough other ways."

"And another thing. Labour," I said. "If I were running labourers for the mine and the mill, the way I used to, the margin wouldn't be quite so narrow."

"Better labour, but we can't afford it," Judy said. "It's one of those

"Have a look at that girl behind us," Judy said. "I think she must be burying something with her toes"

of Animoa.

wrest it from them

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vicious cycles. I can't get the work out of those boys of Animoa's but I haven't a choice."

I'd have gone broke helping Judy. And where would that leave her? McGinnis Mines couldn't afford an aircraft. None of the boys I knew would fly into Delilah for the margin I was on. "It was Animoa who talked Stamford out of using the Sepik labour," I said. "If I were a suspicious character I'd think it was my skin he was trying to peg on the wall."

The chattering women were all across the stream by now. It was only a little stream, fifteen yards wide; but they had forty streams between Lae and Delilah. The last one pulled herself up the bank, and trotted off down the path, her little brown legs twinkling and her grass skirt slicked down around her hips. It was primitive transport, but it delivered the goods.

"And how does Mr. Tully go?" I asked, to change the subject. Her nose wrinkled up a little—it's a way she has—and she started to look worried again. She looks sweet when she's worried, but I don't like it. And I started not to like Robert Tully.

"He pokes about a bit," she said. "He seems interested."

"In birds?" I said. She shook her head.

"Not in birds. Well, not all birds. He likes birds of paradise. And he knows them. The lot. The Duke of Saxony, the Prince Rupert, the red bird. But—and this is funny, Alan. He doesn't know what a dove is. He doesn't know any other birds, and he changes the subject if you talk about them."

"What does he talk about, then?" I asked.

"People. You, for instance. What your trade is like. Who your clients are. How well you know the natives."

I was interested. Who wouldn't be?

"Another thing," she said. "Goragul tells me he had a good look round your store. One evening. After dark."

That puzzled me. It didn't seem necessary. Everything I owned was out there on the airstrip.

WE walked back to the airstrip. That's a beautiful bush, there by Delilah. We watched a dragonfly in bright maroon with crimson spots.

"We can still be happy," I said, and she ran up beside me, and put her arm around my waist and gave me a couple of quick light hugs as we walked. I felt like a king.

After supper I walked over to Animoa's store to get some cigarettes. I was near the door when I heard my name, and stopped. I listened, and I could hear the word *kumul* repeated a few times. *Kumul* is the dried bird of paradise, and as an article of trade it is highly illegal. It is also highly regarded in certain quarters—the feathers sell for a fortune, not so much now to the luxury millinery trade as they used to, but to collectors. I could hear Animoa's voice—he was answering questions—but I couldn't get the other half of the dialogue, so I pushed open the door and walked in.

Tully was there, leaning his elbows on the counter and talking to Animoa. There were three Marys squatting in the corner of the store, and a couple of boys in their thirties, miners, leaning at the other end of the counter, but there wasn't much doubt in my mind it was Tully who had been discussing me. You don't like another fellow discussing you with natives, in New Guinea. I didn't. But I spoke to them both, got my cigarettes and went.

I walked straight from there to the big house. Stamford McGinnis was sitting on the veranda in one of these folding canvas chairs. He seemed asleep. There was a glass of rum on the table beside him, but the bottle was nearly full. After a while he opened his eyes. He didn't recognize me for a moment. Then he said: "Ah, Alan, me boy. Nice to see you. Thought you were away." He didn't get up, and almost immediately he went to sleep again.

Judy came to the door and welcomed me, and we sat down.

I ASKED Judy: "This fellow Tully, so interested in birds of paradise. Was he interested in live birds, or was he interested in *kumul?*"

Judy paused, trying to think.

"It could be *kumul,*" said Judy. "He's as much an ornithologist as I am. It just could be *kumul.*"

I told her about the conversation in the store, and Judy whistled.

"He'd be sounding out old Animoa to see whether you could be approached to carry his birds for him," she said. "I'll bet that's his game. I'll just bet it is."

"I wonder what he told him," I said. "Be interesting to see."

"*Kumul?*" said Stamford, sitting up. "Funny thing about *kumul.* Did you know there's a variant on these mountains? A different species or something. Can't tell, hardly, unless you're an expert. Fellow called Samuels isolated it, a long time ago. Little weedy bloke with skinny legs used to race up and down the mountains. When he found this bird he was drunk for a week. It doesn't live anywhere else. But it's common enough here."

He sighed, and picked up his pipe off the table. "No market in *kumul* any more." He lumbered off.

I took a load of timber into Lae the next day and brought back a motorcycle for the engineer in charge of the mill. Why should anyone buy a motorbike for a place with only an airstrip and a quarter-mile of rough track? But that's what happens in New Guinea, where there's a mystery under every hat. I took out two more loads of timber, and back-loaded petrol. And the second morning after I'd been talking to Judy, Tully came and saw me on the airstrip.

He talked of this and that while I supervised the loading. You have to keep a pretty fine balance with a load like timber on a little ship like the Dragon, especially on an airstrip like Delilah. But when it had all been stowed and the boss-boy was lashing the load down, Tully pulled me aside.

"How would you feel about flying out a few birds of paradise for me?" he asked. "Supposing I had them."

"No dice," I said.

"It ought to be worth quite a bit," he persisted. "You might like to name a figure."

I said: "You're wasting your time, Tully."

"I wouldn't be trespassing on a private racket, would I?" he said. I thought he was sneering, and I hit him. I punched him hard, just once, and stood back. He winced, and backed away, and started grinning.

"All right, all right," he said quickly. "I asked for it. Look, it's going to hurt me less if I put my cards on the table. I haven't got any birds of paradise. I'm not likely to get any. But if I had any, how could I get them out?"

"You couldn't," I told him. "I'm all the transport there is from Delilah, and I won't carry birds."

"Well, here's the problem," he said. He was still rubbing his jaw, and I thought he was being remarkably pleasant, considering.

"I never saw a bird of paradise

continued on page 35

NEXT WEEK'S STORIES

TERROR IN THE TOWN
by HUGH B. CAVE

OTHERWISE ENGAGED
by BRETON AMIS

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

ROGER SMITHELLS

Now for the INDOOR GARDEN

1

2

3

4

1. Two varieties of the huge ficus or fig family. On the chest is the little Ficus radicans with silver edged leaves and the large specimen is Ficus lyrata or "Fiddle Leaf Fig"
2. Spectacular and eas, to grow is the Anthurium, called "Pig Tail Plant" because of the curly pink "tail" that grows from the vivid scarlet flower
3. A colourful bowl comprising (l. to r.) Chlorophytum capense variegatum, Dracaena and Maranta leuconeura
4. Packed into this bowl are (l. to r.) Begonia rex (front) and Fittonia argyroneura, Peperomia hederifolia and another Begonia rex variety, with an Aechmea fasciata above. These would dramatize the hall

FOR gardeners this has been one of the happiest summers ever. Gardens have never looked lovelier. Flowers have never done so well. But soon we may be sighing over the last rose of summer and dreaming of the flowers that bloom in the spring.

Now is the time to move indoors, where the fun of growing things can go on all through the winter with the scores of house plants that are now available to us. Get your plants in as quickly as you can. Give them what remains of the better weather to acclimatize themselves. Remember that they have come from ideal conditions in humid greenhouses and that the shock of change to the drier air and less concentrated light of most of our homes is a severe one. They'll get over it all right, but they will appreciate an opportunity to get over it gradually.

Aim at colour

When one mentions house plants the mind springs automatically to pictures of ivies, philodendrons, rubber plants and tradescantias. These are still available, of course, many of them in new and improved species, more colourful and easier for the home. But new plants are constantly being introduced on our markets and if you search you can undoubtedly find just the exact colour, shape, texture and habit for that table in the corner or that wall in the hall.

Colour is the thing in house plants today. The title of "green plants" doesn't hold any longer, for many of them flower, and even those that don't can have almost any colour foliage from white and cream to the most vivid purples, magentas and scarlets.

Colour is easy, then, and we can use what we like, more or less, for our room decoration. But house plants come as trees, bushes, climbers, trailers—even as hunks, spikes, balls and plate-shaped plants in the cactus and succulent lines.

Most of the plants available to us from florists' shops bear labels which both serve to identify the plants and which bear brief details of the care and treatment necessary to keep them in good health. An additional assistance is that these labels are tipped with different colours, each indicating the toughness of the plant. A red-tipped label is used for easy plants, blue for intermediate and yellow for the more delicate specimens. So you can choose your plants according to the greenness of your fingers.

Among the easiest plants to grow in our homes are those that require least water. All the cacti and succulents, for example, with their curious shapes, should never be really wet, even in summer when they are making growth. In the winter they should be allowed to dry out almost completely. The same can be said of the attractive (but mockingly named) Mother-in-Law's Tongue, *Sansevieria trifasciata*, with its long, spear-like leaves. These all like plenty of sun, although the sansevieria will also stand shade.

The beautiful *Aphelandra squarrosa*, with its white-striped green leaves and its cockscomb of exceptionally bright yellow flowers is a water lover. The soil should never be allowed to dry out or the leaves will droop and drop. Keep it in the shade and always moist, though not sodden.

Very convenient in its watering habit is the *Aechmea fasciata*, for its rosette of green and grey-banded leaves spring out from the centre, leaving a natural cup.

This should always be kept filled with water. From this cup arises the wonderful flower that is simultaneously pink, scarlet and blue.

Among climbers, you still can't beat the familiar ivies, philodendrons and that hardy duo the *Rhoicissus rhomboidea* and *Cissus antartica*. These are all easy, fast-growing vines that can be trained to climb up a trellis or a string.

The anthurium, with its curious scarlet flower with the curly pig's tail, is another easy plant which likes plenty of water and not too much direct light.

The new aspidistra

Still one of the most popular plants is the *Ficus elastica decora*, an improved form of the India rubber plant. This enjoys normal summer watering, some shade and an occasional wipe over the large and handsome leaves to remove the dust which collects so easily on them.

Coming back to favour after a long period of disgrace is the old cast-iron plant itself, the aspidistra. But it's in a new guise, the leaves streaked and slashed with gold instead of being a dingy green. The new varieties are as hardy as the old.

House plants, like cut flowers, seem to last better in some homes than in others. This isn't merely a matter of the owner having or not having green fingers. It's a matter of the physical surroundings of the plants. For example, some of us rely on gas for cooking, water and house heating. But gas, even in minute proportions, is deadly to many plants. And even if your appliances are really efficient, gas (and electricity, come to that) is an air

How to plant a cactus

Cover the drainage hole in the bottom of the pot with a piece of crock. Put fairly large pieces of broken brick in the pot, with the smallest pieces on top, before adding the compost. John Innes compost is suitable for all pot plants, but for cacti and succulents the amount of sand should be doubled. Don't forget to use washed silver sand, *not* builder's sand.

dryer. It keeps you snug partly by drying off all the moisture in the air—another sure way to kill plants, which nine times out of ten like a lovely moist, humid warmth that they normally find in the jungle, the natural home of so many of them. Again, many of us, unfortunately, have to live in cities where the very air we breathe is saturated with dust, dirt and chemicals. All these shade the natural light the plants demand, clog the pores through which they breathe and feed into their lungs contaminated air. The surprising thing is that some of these plants manage to live at all!

But never lose sight of the fact that every variety of house plant on sale today has been specially bred for this purpose. The originals may have come from jungle or desert, but those you buy have been cultivated, hybridized, purified and so changed that they are conditioned to the sort of life they will be asked to lead. I have had complaints from some readers that they have had to pay half a crown for an ivy plant that they could easily have picked from the wall around their own gardens. This is not true. The ivy plants bought in florists' shops or nurseries are special hybrids that have been raised specially to provide a daintier type of leaf, a more bushy growth, a greater resistance to poor lighting, dust, dirt and atmospheric pollution. They are different plants entirely.

Treat them as pets

The analogy has been used before, but if you remember to treat your house plants as you do your pets you will not go far wrong. They like some shelter, warmth, comfort, food and drink, cleanliness, and even a little exercise now and then.

Just as you wouldn't put the dog's basket immediately in front of an open door in the winter's cold nor in front of a gas fire in summer, so you wouldn't subject a plant (any plant) to hot or cold draughts. Beware the window sill! It may be a good place for plants in summer, though it may be draughty even then, but in winter it can be deadly, for so many of us pull the curtains at night *behind* the plants, leaving them in the cold and dark while we enjoy the warmth of the room.

Food and drink is a vexed problem. Most humans, I am given to understand, eat and drink far too much. This same atmosphere of generosity applies to our plants. Most of us are apt to overfeed and over-water our plants and more plants are killed by kindness than by any other means.

Plant baptism

With few exceptions water seldom but thoroughly, not from a can but by total immersion. Baptize the plant by standing it in the sink or in a bucket of water until air bubbles cease to rise from the soil. Then allow the plant to drain for a few minutes before replacing it in its original position. Repeat the process only when the soil is almost bone dry. There are exceptions to this general rule and they will be indicated in the table at the end.

Feeding requires more discretion. As a general rule, over-feeding results not in indigestion but in death. Underfeeding is better, for at least the plant will live. There are various plant foods available to us. These vary from the home-made solution of horse or cow manure soaked in water, and then diluted, to the handy (and inexpensive) foods that are made up for us by the chemists. These can be in liquid, powder, or tablet form. The best thing to do with them is follow explicitly the directions that are given on the packet, bottle or can. If in doubt, always give *less* than you feel should be the right dose. Some are measured in drops!

Remember, too, that when you first buy a plant its soil contains sufficient food to last it at least six months. Another rule to follow is that only when a plant is growing vigorously or is in flower should it be fed. In the winter, when few plants make any growth at all to speak of, leave out the feeding entirely. If you continue to feed, you will stimulate the plant into unnatural growth and so cause it to exhaust itself and die.

All plants need some light, but very few like direct sunlight. The best place for most plants is a little away from a west window. This will mean that they get plenty of light for most of the day but will suffer little from the actual burning effect of direct sunlight. Exceptions are some of the cacti and succulents, which can never get enough sunlight in this country, and some of the tougher, thicker-leaved plants that will do quite well in the comparative gloom of a hall or some other dimly lit room. To make another general rule we can say that the thicker and darker green the leaves the less direct light the plant will need.

So long as the temperature doesn't fall below freezing (and it seldom does in most of our rooms) then most plants will exist quite happily so long as they are not over-watered. Heated rooms are generally not good for them, because these rooms get stuffy and dry. Far better to put the plants in winter in rooms that do not get too hot in the evenings and then have a sudden drop in temperature overnight.

The only thing really enjoyed by plants that we can't normally give them under our day-to-day living conditions in our homes is humidity. All plants prefer more moisture in the air than do human beings. So in some instances we have to try to find some artificial means of providing them with this life-giving humidity. There are several ways we can do this, none of them difficult. For instance, we can make another general rule: never stand a plant alone on a saucer unless you know for certain that the plant will like it. Instead, either stand several plants together in a trough or tray on top of of a layer of pebbles, peat, vermiculite, moss, Florapak or some other moisture-retaining substance, or sink the plant pot inside another and larger container that holds one of these moisture-retaining materials. By doing this, you kill two birds with one stone—you allow a certain minimum amount of moisture to creep up into the pot and keep the roots moist and cool and you permit the creation of a micro-climate, moist and clinging, that comes as this lower moisture evaporates and rises around the plant's leaves.

Use clean water

Invest in a spray. It need only be a polythene squeeze bottle that you can buy for a shilling at a chain store. Spray clean tepid water over the plants once or twice a week. They'll love it.

Many of the plants we grow in our homes can easily be propagated without special equipment. Tradescantias, ivies and philodendrons, for example, will form roots quite easily when shoots are merely placed in a jar of plain water. Cuttings from many plants will root well in normal garden soil, though this should preferably be well drained and fairly rich in leaf mould. You can constantly breed new plants to take the place of any that may die or get too leggy.

Pruning is beneficial to many of the climbers and trailers. This should preferably be undertaken in spring or early summer. Many of the climbers will grow so fast that they over-reach themselves and become straggly. To cut them right down to a few inches spurs them to fresh green growth and provides you with a more attractive plant in the long run.

Although many plants will last for years and years, some must be classified as temporary. They grow and they die, all in a matter of a few months. Think of them as rather long-lasting cut flowers and use them for decoration in much the same way. They cost no more, really.

Green finger tips

1. Water thoroughly, preferably by total immersion.
2. Most plants will take cool conditions, but not frost.
3. All plants hate draughts, hot or cold.
4. Never over-feed.
5. Plants do better when their pots are sunk in another container with a moisture-holding medium between.
6. Most plants like light but not direct sunlight.
7. Don't re-pot your plants unless they really need it, certainly not in their first year.
8. Clean large leaves of dust, but never use oil, just water.
9. Plants love a weekly spray with clean, tepid water.
10. Don't handle your plants unnecessarily or leave them where passers-by brush against them.

Make your plants at home

Good display makes the most of their natural beauty, says

ROGER SMITHELLS

A tin-lined basket painted gold is a pretty container for a collection of upright and trailing plants. You could easily assemble this yourself

Four iron leaves encircling a shallow bowl make this flower pot holder. Price 10s., from leading stores. Designed by Jack Schrier Ltd.

An old brass oil lamp-standard makes a pedestal for the tumbling beauty of Columnea vedrariensis's striking leaves and scarlet flowers

ROGER SMITHELLS WILL HELP YOU

with your home-making problems. Write to him at "John Bull : Everybody's Weekly," 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1, enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope for reply. Please send a rough drawing or diagram if this will help to make your problem clear

HOW RIGHT YOU ARE, JEEVES by P. G. WODEHOUSE

"HERRING!" came the cry, and an irate Rev. Aubrey was with us

Wooster might have known that there was only one way to handle his old headmaster.

Set a girl of spirit about his ears . . .

Down with Upjohn!

THE plan to push the Rev. Aubrey Upjohn into the lake emanated, as they say, from Sir Roderick Glossop. Unhappily, it was I and the dachshund, Poppet, who ended in the lake—where "Kipper" Herring, my old school chum, joined us shortly. . . .

But I am going too fast. My name is Bertie Wooster and, at the time of which I speak, I was a guest at Brankley Court—the home of my Uncle Tom and Aunt Dahlia Portarlington-Travers.

Kipper and his fiancée, Bobbie Wickham, were fellow guests—so was Upjohn, one-time head of the prep. school that Kipper and I had attended. Upjohn was suing the *Thursday Review* for libel, and Kipper, who had penned the offensive article, was trying to get him to call it off.

Pop Glossop suggested that if I pushed Upjohn into the lake and Kipper fished him out, he—Kipper—would earn Upjohn's undying gratitude. I thought it was a splendid plot, full of subtlety and guile, though my man Jeeves was dubious about it.

Glossop, I should explain, was at Brankley disguised as Swordfish, the butler. But in his true capacity as a mental specialist he was keeping a shrewd eye on Wilbert Cream, a notorious American playboy. Cream was making romantic headway with Upjohn's stepdaughter, Phyllis Mills. Aunt Dahlia, godmother to Phyllis, hoped to prevent them marrying by producing Glossop's evidence of Wilbert's mental state.

The thing could not be done in straightforward fashion because Uncle Tom had a big deal in the balance with Wilbert's father and the Creams were not to be offended—Wilbert's mother, a mystery writer, was also staying at Brankley. Somehow she had got the idea that Swordfish-Glossop was a criminal. She also thought I was a bit *non compos*: she had found me twice in Wilbert's room and I told her I was looking for mice.

In fact, I was searching for a piece of antique silver, a cow-creamer, which I thought Wilbert had snitched from Uncle Tom's collection. I had since learned Uncle Tom had sold the thing to Wilbert—and that it was now missing anyway. From this I deduced that Glossop had successfully purloined it.

This was the state of affairs at the time of the lake episode. Wilbert Cream jumped in to save the dachshund, Poppet, and Kipper hoisted me out. He seemed a little peeved when he found it was Wooster, not Upjohn, he had rescued. But Upjohn was in the house—talking to his lawyer. . . .

FINAL INSTALMENT

SQUELCHING back to the house some little while later, rather in the manner of Napoleon squelching back from Moscow, I encountered Aunt Dahlia. She gaped at me dumbly for a moment.

She said: "Wilbert Cream came by here just now. He looked like a drowned rat too."

"Oh, yes?"

"And after he had streamed away young Herring came along, looking like a drowned rat. What's been going on?"

"It's a long story," I said.

"All right, get into your bally dry things, and then come and tell me."

I was in my room, having shed the moistened outer crust and substituted something in pale flannel, when there was a knock on the door. I found Bobbie and Kipper on the threshold.

"Well," said Bobbie, "you made a nice mess of things. Tripping over your flat feet and falling in like that."

"Pardon me," I said, preserving with an effort the polished suavity demanded from an English gentleman when chewing the rag with one of the other sex, "you're talking through the back of your fatheaded little neck. I was hurled into the depths by an Act of God—to wit, a totally unexpected dachshund getting between my legs."

"Yes," said Kipper, always the staunch pal, "I don't think it was Bertie's fault, angel. I feel that Bertie emerges without a stain on his character."

"I don't. I've always thought him

ILLUSTRATED BY RICHARD O. ROSE

"The bank

does my remembering"

Said he, rather smugly. But nowadays, you know, it's really common sense. Take insurance premiums, for instance: he never gets notes from his insurance company saying his policy will lapse on the umpteenth instant unless renewed. His rent is paid on the dot, and so are his club and charity subscriptions. He achieves this blissful state by giving us a 'standing order', which simply means written instructions as to the amount, the date and the payee. Then he leaves the remembering to us, secure in the knowledge that 'money is our business'.

If you were a customer of Barclays we could do the same for you. It only takes about ten minutes to open an account and you'll never again spend so little time to so much advantage.

BARCLAYS BANK LIMITED

How right you are, Jeeves

continued from previous page

half-baked, and now I think they didn't even put him in the oven. Still, it doesn't matter."

"No, it doesn't really matter, Bertie," Kipper said, "because Bobbie has hit on an even better idea. Just run through it for Bertie, darling."

"Well, you know how you feel when you suddenly discover you've a friend, someone who'll stick up for you through thick and thin? It touches you."

"Exactly," Kipper said. "You nurse him in your bosom. And that's what Upjohn is going to do to me, Bertie, when I come in and throw the whole weight of my sympathy and support on his side as you stand there intimidating him."

"As I stand there what?"

"The idea is that you go to Upjohn and start ticking him off. Just when he's quailing beneath your scorn and wishing some friendly soul would intervene and save him from this terrible ordeal, I come in, having heard all."

KIPPER went burbling on: "Bobbie suggests that I knock you down, but I don't think I could do that. I'll simply say, 'Wooster, I am shocked. Shocked and astounded. I cannot understand how you can talk like that to a man I have always respected and looked up to, a man in whose preparatory school I spent the happiest years of my life. You strangely forget yourself, Wooster.' Upon which you slink out, bathed in shame and confusion, and Upjohn thanks me brokenly."

"I still think you ought to knock him down," said Bobbie.

"Having endeared myself to him thus, I lead the conversation round to the libel suit."

"One good punch in the eye would do it."

"I say I have seen the current issue of the *Thursday Review* containing those very offensive remarks and I can quite understand him being indignant and wanting to mulct the journal in substantial damages; but 'Don't forget, Mr. Upjohn,' I shall say, 'that when a weekly paper loses a chunk of money, it has to retrench, and the way it retrenches is by getting rid of the more junior members of the staff. You wouldn't want me to lose my job, would you, Mr. Upjohn?'

"His eyes fill with tears. He clasps my hand. He tells me that no money in the world would make him dream of doing an injury to the man who championed him so stoutly against the louse Wooster. Any questions?"

"Not from me," said Bobbie. "It isn't as if he knows it was you who wrote that review. It wasn't signed."

It will probably have been noticed that during these exchanges I had taken little or no part in the conversation. This was because I was fully occupied with envisaging the horror that lay before me. I was barred from backing out by the code of the Woosters, which, as is pretty generally known, renders it impossible for me to let a pal down.

So I uttered a rather husky "Right ho" and tried not to remember how Upjohn looked without his moustache.

Uncle Tom's study was a place I seldom entered during my visits to Brankley Court. It was more than a year since I had been inside this sanctum, and I had forgotten how extraordinarily like its interior was to that of the Rev. Aubrey Upjohn's lair at Malvern House.

"Oh, hallo," I said. "Reading?"

The Reverend lowered his book—one of Ma Cream's, I noticed—and flashed an upper lip at me.

"Your powers of observation have not led you astray, Wooster."

"Interesting book?"

"Very. I am counting the minutes until I can resume its perusal."

I'm pretty quick, and I at once spotted that the atmosphere was not of the utmost cordiality. However, I persevered.

"I see you've shaved off your moustache."

"I have. You do not feel, I hope, that I pursued a mistaken course?"

"Oh no, rather not. I grew a moustache myself last year, but was persuaded to get rid of it."

"I see. Well, I should be delighted to hear more of your reminiscences, Wooster, but at the moment I am expecting another telephone call from my lawyer and would prefer to speak to him in private. Ah!" he said, as the bell rang and he reached for the instrument. "Goodbye, Wooster."

I saw what this meant. He didn't want me around. There was nothing for it but to ooze out, so I oozed.

Birds were twittering outside, and so were Kipper and Bobbie, she twittering rather the more twitteringly of the two.

"What on earth are you fooling about for like that, Bertie?" she said. "All that rot about moustaches. I thought you'd be well into it by this time."

I pointed out that as yet the Rev. Aubrey had not given me a cue.

"I see what Bertie means, darling," said Kipper. "He wants——"

"HERRING!"

The Rev. Aubrey was with us.

HE had spoken with precisely the same intonation he had used in the distant days at Malvern House, Bramley-on-Sea, and Kipper wilted visibly. You could see that the years had rolled away—he was back in an Eton jacket and knickerbockers.

"Sir?" he quavered.

"I have been talking to my lawyer on the telephone."

"Yes, sir."

"What he said stunned me. He has irrefutable evidence that it was you who libelled me in the columns of the *Thursday Review*. What have you to say, Herring?"

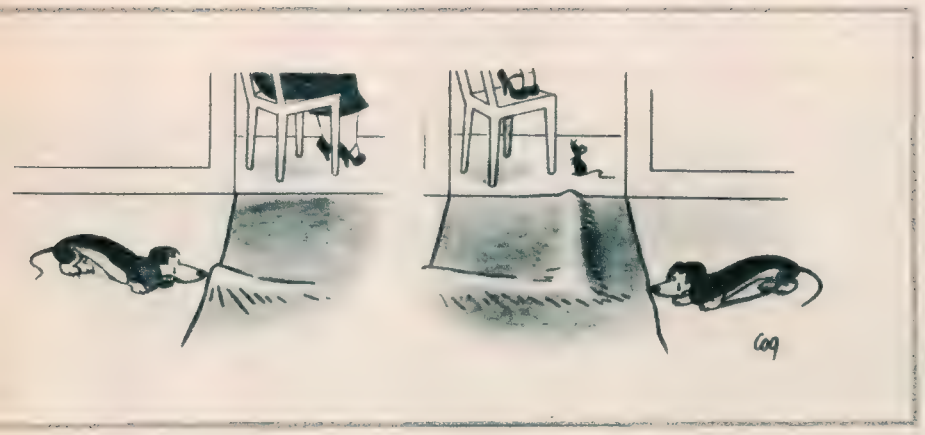
"Yes, sir."

"But I put in the bit about the sausages, Mr. Upjohn," said Bobbie.

He quelled her with a glance, a thing I couldn't have done in a month of Sundays.

"Silence, please. I should be glad to learn, Herring, why you describe my book as—I quote—'tripe'."

I drifted away. It was plain that the Rev. Aubrey was planning to continue disembowelling his former pupil for some little time, and I had no heart to witness the distressing spectacle. I tottered along to Aunt Dahlia's



boudoir, feeling that she might possibly come across with aid and comfort.

"You busy, old ancestor?" I said. "I just looked in to tell you a spot of bad news. The worst has happened."

"I'll say it has," she responded, with vehemence. "Do you know what, Bertie? That ass Phyllis has gone and got engaged to Wilbert Cream."

Her words gave me quite a wallop, I must admit, and took my mind abruptly off the Kipper-Upjohn unpleasantness.

"She came skipping in here just now," Aunt Dahlia went on, "clapping her little hands and burbling about how very, very happy she was, dear Mrs. Travers. The silly young geezer. I nearly conked her one."

"But how did it happen?"

"Apparently that dog of hers joined you in your water polo."

"Yes, that's right. But what's that got to do with it?"

"Wilbert Cream dived in and hooked him out."

"But you don't marry fellows because they rescue dachshunds."

"You do if you've a mentality like

COWARDS—1

I should never fear to commit a cowardly act if it were to my advantage.

Napoleon Bonaparte

Phyllis Mills has got. Poor Jane."

"Poor who?"

"Her mother. Jane Mills."

"Oh, ah, yes. She was a pal of yours, you told me."

"The best I ever had, and she was always saying to me, 'Dahlia, old girl, if I pop off before you do, for heaven's sake look after Phyllis and see that she doesn't marry some frightful outsider.' And I said, 'Jane, you can rely on me.' And now this happens!"

"It isn't your fault."

"I invited Wilbert Cream here."

"Merely to help Uncle Tom."

"And I let Upjohn stick around, always at her elbow, egging her on."

"Yes, Upjohn's the bird I blame."

"Me, too. I'd give a tenner to have Aubrey Upjohn here at this moment."

She got him for nothing, for as she spoke he came in, having presumably said his say to Kipper. She turned on him like a tiger—or rather, of course, a tigress—of the jungle.

"Aubrey! Do you know that Phyllis is engaged to Wilbert Cream?"

"What! Are you sure?"

"She told me herself. I suppose you're delighted."

"Delighted?" he said. "Of course I am."

"Then you're an ass."

"Really, Dahlia!"

"A fine way for Jane's daughter to finish. Mrs. Broadway Willie!"

"Broadway Willie?"

"That's what he's called in the circles into which he will now introduce Phyllis."

I didn't like the way things were trending. Admittedly the aged relative was putting up a great show, and it was a pleasure to listen to her, but I had seen Upjohn's lip twitch and that look of smug satisfaction come into his face which I had so often seen when he had been counsel for the prosecution in some case in which I was involved, and had spotted a damaging flaw in my testimony.

"My dear Dahlia," he said. "I think we are talking at cross purposes. You appear to be under the impression that Phyllis is marrying Wilbert's younger brother Wilfred, the notorious New York playboy. Wilfred would make—and on three occasions has made—a most undesirable husband, but no one to my knowledge has ever spoken a derogatory word of Wilbert. He is a member of the faculty of one of the greatest American universities."

Aunt Dahlia gulped. "You mean there are two of them?"

UPJOHN was all unction: "You have grasped the position of affairs to a nicety," he said. "I could wish Phyllis no better husband. Wilbert has looks, brains, character . . . and plenty of money."

He rolled the words round his tongue like vintage port. "Yes, most satisfactory, most satisfactory," he went on. "And now I must be leaving you. While waiting for a telephone call from my lawyer just now, I dipped idly into a novel of suspense from the pen of Wilbert's mother and I am bound to say I found it quite engrossing."

He passed from the screen, and only when he had passed did the aged relative utter the sizzling expletive which must have been scorching her interior for some moments.

"Of all the damn fatheaded silly things!" she ejaculated. "With a million names to choose from, these ruddy Creams call one ruddy son Wilbert and the other ruddy son Wilfred. Just going out of their way to mislead the innocent bystander."

I begged her to keep an eye on her blood pressure. But she brushed me off with a curt request that I boil my head.

"I can see you're in dangerous mood," I said.

"You bet I'm in dangerous. . . . My God! He's in again."

And the Rev. Aubrey was indeed filtering over the threshold.

"Dahlia," he said, "I told you that while I was waiting for my lawyer to telephone, I was reading a book by Mrs. Cream. I left it in the study."

"Well?"

"When I returned there a moment ago, I found my former pupil, Herring, and Miss Wickham reading it. And they refused to restore it to me. Both, I may mention, were extremely rude."

I could see what had happened. Feeling that the ingratiating of Kipper with Upjohn was no longer a practical project—that all, in short, was now lost—the young couple had decided that they might as well save something from the wreck by telling him a few home truths about himself.

"And what it comes to is this," Upjohn said. "I refuse to remain in the same house with these two persons. Either they go or I go."

I could see Aunt Dahlia swelling slowly like a chunk of bubble gum. "Oh?" she said. "So you have decided to revise my guest list for me? You have the nerve, the—the——"

I saw she needed helping out, so threw her the line.

"Audacity."

"The audacity to dictate to me who I shall have in my house."

It should have been "whom," but

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MAKE 1st FOLD DOWNWARDS ALONG THIS LINE

How right you are, Jeeves

continued from previous page

I thought that I'd better let it go.

"You have the——"

"Crust."

"— the immortal rind," she amended, and I had to admit it was stronger, "to tell me whom"—she got it right that time—"I may entertain at Brankley Court and who"—wrong again—"I may not. Very well, Aubrey, if you feel unable to breathe the same air as my friends, you must please yourself. I believe the hotel in Market Snodsbury is quite comfortable."

"I shall go there," said Upjohn, "as soon as my things are packed. Perhaps you will be good enough to tell your butler to pack them."

He strode out, and Aunt Dahlia, still snorting, rang the bell.

Jeeves appeared.

"Jeeves?" said the relative. "I was ringing for——"

"It is Sir Roderick's afternoon off, madam."

"Oh? Well, would you mind packing Mr. Upjohn's things. He is leaving."

"Very good, madam."

"And you can drive him to Market Snodsbury, Bertie."

"Right ho," I said, not much liking the task but liking less the idea of *nolle-prosequie*-ing this incandescent aunt in her current frame of mind. Safety first is the Wooster slogan.

It isn't much of a run from Brankley Court to Market Snodsbury, and it was practically in a trice that I deposited Upjohn at the Bull and Bush and started homewards. I garaged the car and went to Aunt Dahlia's sanctum.

She wasn't there, but Bobbie was; and not only Bobbie but Jeeves.

"Where's Kipper?" I asked, and was surprised to note that Bobbie was dancing round the room on tiptoe.

"Reggie?" she said. "He's in your Uncle's study reading that book of Mrs. Cream's."

"We ought to be in conference," I said.

"What about?"

"Upjohn. The libel action."

"Oh, that? It's all right about that. Jeeves has pinched his speech."

I DIDN'T get this. Jeeves rescued me: "Miss Wickham's allusion is to the typescript of the speech which Mr. Upjohn is to deliver tomorrow to the scholars of Market Snodsbury Grammar School, sir."

"She said you'd pinched it."

"I deemed it best, sir."

"And did you deem it right!" said Bobbie, executing a Nijinsky whatever-it's-called. "Either Upjohn agrees to drop that libel action, or he doesn't get these notes, as he calls them, and without them he won't be able to utter a word. You concur, Bertie?"

Well, now that I had got the idea, I concurred like nobody's business. I remembered what Aunt Dahlia had told me about this strange inability of Upjohn's to be silver-tongued unless he had the stuff all ready to read.

"Yes, I concur."

"He'll have to come across with the price of the papers. Won't he, Jeeves?"

"He would appear to have no alternative, miss."

"Suppose he says he's ill and can't appear?" I said.

"He won't."

"I would."

"But you aren't trying to get the Conservative Association of the Market Snodsbury division to choose you as their candidate at the coming by-election. He is, and it's vitally important for him to address the multitude tomorrow and make a good impression, because half the selection committee have sons at the school and will be there to judge for themselves how good he is as a speaker."

"I didn't know that."

"One picks up these items of interest, sir," Jeeves said. "My informant was Sir Roderick Glossop, who gleaned his knowledge from conversation heard while waiting at the dinner table."

"So that fixes that," said Bobbie. "His political future hangs on this speech. We've got it, and he hasn't. We take it from there. He'll be ringing up any moment now, making inquiries."

Upjohn was as good as her word. The telephone at this moment tinkled and Bobbie sprang to answer it.

"Hallo, Upjohn?" said Bobbie. "This is Roberta Wickham, Upjohn. Hang on to your hat, Upjohn, because you're going to get one of those unpleasant shocks, Upjohn."

I must say that, much as I disapproved in many ways of this carrot-topped Jezebel, as she was sometimes called, there was no getting away from it that she had mastered the art of talking to retired preparatory schoolmasters. The golden words came pouring out like syrup. Beginning with a curt "Listen, Buster," she proceeded to sketch out with admirable clarity the salient points of the situation as she envisaged it. And, judging from the loud buzzing noises that came over the wire, it was evident that the nub was not escaping him.

Presently they died away, and Bobbie spoke.

"That's fine," she said. "I was sure you'd come round to our view. Then Reggie and I will be with you shortly."

She hung up, and legged it from the room. I turned to Jeeves as I had so often turned to him before when musing on the activities of the other sex.

"Women, Jeeves!"

"Yes, sir."

"I thought she was splendidly firm."

"Yes, sir."

"There's something about red hair," I said, and would have spoken further on the subject, but before I could get under way he was shimmering silently from the room, and looking round I saw that Mrs. Cream was in my midst.

This was the first time I had seen Ma Cream today, for she had gone off around noon to lunch with some friends in Birmingham, and I would willingly not have seen her now.

Fixing me with a penetrating eye, she said: "Now perhaps you'll believe me."

I said I would be glad to, but about what?

"About that butler."

"What about him?" I said.

"I saw him coming out of Wilbert's room this morning. I thought nothing of it at the time. But I saw Wilbert just now and he tells me that a valuable eighteenth-century cream jug, which he bought from Mr. Travers and kept in a drawer in his bureau, is missing."

"Yes, so he was telling me," I said. "And I told him he'd probably just mislaid it."

"That's your view, is it? You feel that Swordfish is pure as driven snow?"

"Or even purer. Think of those references of his."

"Then how do you account for the fact that Wilbert's silver cream jug is at this moment tucked away in Swordfish's bedroom under his clean shirts?"

THESE words caught me amidships and took all the spirit out of me. "Oh, is it?" I said.

"Yes, *sir*, that's where it is. Directly Wilbert told me that the jug had gone, I remembered seeing Swordfish sneaking furtively out of his room, and I put two and two together. Having discovered that Swordfish was away on his afternoon off, I went to his bedroom and searched it thoroughly, and there the thing was, hidden away under his clean shirts. I've sent for the police."

I gaped at the woman. "You've whatted for the what?"

"Well, what did you expect me to do? They're sending a sergeant. He ought to be here at any moment. And I'm going now to stand outside Swordfish's door, to see that nobody tampers with the evidence."

She buzzed off to keep her vigil, leaving me pretty much in the depths. Then a moment later, Bobbie and Aunt Dahlia came in. They had the air of a young female and elderly female who were sitting on top of the world.

"Roberta tells me she's induced Upjohn to withdraw the libel suit," said the aged relative. "I couldn't be more pleased, but I'm blowed if I can imagine how she did it."

"Oh, I just appealed to his better feelings," said Bobbie.

She gave me one of those significant glances. I saw what she meant. The ancestor, she was warning me, must never learn that she had achieved her ends by jeopardizing the delivery of the Upjohn speech.

"So now everything's fine," Bobbie added.

"Oh, is it?" I said, and uttered a hacking laugh.

Without further *pourparlers* I unshipped my tale. I had anticipated that they would take it big, and they did take it big. Aunt Dahlia reeled.

"You see the set-up," I continued, not wanting to rub it in but feeling that they should be fully briefed. "Glossop will return from his afternoon off to find this sergeant waiting for him complete with handcuffs. We can hardly expect him to accept an exemplary sentence without a murmur, so his first move will be to establish his innocence by revealing all. 'True,' he will say, 'I did pinch this bally cow-creamer, but merely because I thought Wilbert had pinched it.' And he will go on to explain his position in the house—all this, mind you, in front of Ma Cream.

"So what ensues? The sergeant removes the gyves from his wrists, and Ma Cream asks you if she may use your telephone for a moment, as she wishes to call her husband on long distance. Pop Cream listens attentively to the tale she tells and, when Uncle Tom looks in on him later, he finds him with folded arms and a forbidding scowl. 'Travers,' he says addressing Uncle Tom, 'the deal's off.' "

"You're right," said Aunt Dahlia, fanning the brow. "Go and fetch Jeeves, Roberta. And what you do, Bertie, is get out that car of yours and scour the countryside for Glossop."

"Right ho," I said. "Anything to oblige."

Well, of course, I'd known from the start that the thing would be a washout. You can't find loony-doctors on their afternoon off just by driving around Worcestershire in a car. You need bloodhounds and handkerchiefs for them to sniff at and all that professional stuff. I stuck it out for about an hour and then, apprised by a hollow feeling in the midriff that the dinner hour was approaching, headed for home.

ARRIVING there, I found Bobbie in the drawing-room. She told me that the cocktails would be coming along.

"I could do with one," I said. "I couldn't find Glossop anywhere."

She seemed surprised. "Glossop? Oh, he's been back for ages."

Her calm amazed me.

"Good Lord! Has he been pinched?"

"Of course not. He explained everything."

"And is Ma Cream very sore?"

"Not a bit. . . . Oh, but of course I was forgetting. You don't know the latest developments. Jeeves came through with an excellent scheme."

"He did? I wouldn't have thought even Jeeves could have solved the impasse."

"Oh, yes, he did it with a wave of the hand. On his advice Glossop revealed his identity to the sergeant."

"And Ma Cream wasn't sore."

"No, that was because, still acting on Jeeves's advice, Glossop said your aunt had got him here to observe *you*."

"*Me?*" I said.

"And of course it carried immediate conviction with Mrs. Cream. She recalled the time when she had found you hunting mice under her son's dressing-table and sitting on the floor with

Everybody's Puzzling

BRAIN TEASER by Fred Borders

Jack Colley hired a taxi to take him to Epsom and back at an inclusive fare of £4 10s.

At Mitcham, which is twice as far from Epsom as from Jack's home, he met and picked up two friends. He agreed to take them on to Epsom and bring them back to Mitcham.

How much of the fare should each friend pay?

QUIZZLE

The letters in numbered squares, if placed in the small grid to the left of the puzzle in numerical sequence, will spell a well-known quotation and help to check your solutions.

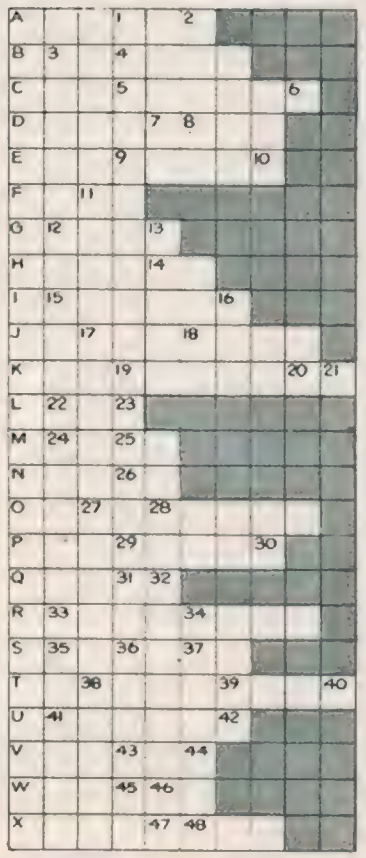
CLUE DOWN

A. He is said to have flown with ease in the Victorian era (3, 3, 2, 3, 6, 7).

CLUES ACROSS

A. Roof of straw or reeds.
B. Poisonous plant of the nightshade family.
C. Seaside walk or drive.
D. Treacle which drains from sugar.
E. Minor planet.
F. Point of stem from which leaf grows.
G. Untwisted rope for caulking.
H. Japan.
I. Hungarian gypsy.
J. One of the main Lake District peaks.
K. Horseman.
L. Family or clan war.
M. Colloquial name for deputy or substitute.
N. Crimean resort, scene of 1945 Conference.
O. Hospital.
P. Undue patronage to relations.
Q. Belly-band of saddle.
R. Brawling woman.
S. Musical flourish or run.
T. Diplomatic agent.
U. Roman Catholic Bishop.
V. American card game.
W. French infantry soldier, originally Algerian.
X. Title given to a Cardinal.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48		



NOW TURN TO PAGE 37 FOR THE ANSWERS

chairs draped round your neck. So she quite agreed that it was high time you were under the observation of an experienced eye like Glossop's. It's extraordinary how things turn out for the best, isn't it?"

At this moment Jeeves entered, bearing a tray. Bobbie drained a glass and legged it, saying that if she didn't get dressed she'd be late for dinner, and Jeeves and I were alone.

"Well, Jeeves," I said.

"Sir?"

"Miss Wickham has told me all."

"Ah, yes, sir."

"Don't say 'Yes, sir!' Thanks to you I have been widely publicized as off my rocker."

"Oh, no, sir. Merely in your immediate circle now resident at Brankley Court."

"You have held me up at the bar of world opinion——"

"It was not easy to think of an alternative scheme, sir."

"And let me tell you," I said, and I meant this to sting, "it's amazing that you got away with it. There's a flaw in it sticking up like a sore thumb. The cow-creamer was in Glossop's bedroom. How did he account for that?"

"He said he had removed it from your room, sir, where he had ascertained that you had hidden it after purloining it from Mr. Cream."

I was stunned. "You mean," I . . . yes, thundered would be the word, "that I am now labelled not only as a loony in a general sort of way but also as a kleptomaniac?"

"Merely to your immediate circle now resident at Brankley Court, sir."

"You keep saying that, and it's the purest banana oil. You don't really think the Creams will maintain a tactful reserve? They'll dine out on it for years. Returning to America, they'll spread the story from the rockbound coasts of Maine to the Everglades of Florida, and when I go over there again, keen looks will be shot at me at every house I go into and spoons counted before I leave."

"We must always remember what the poet Longfellow said, sir."

"What was that?"

" 'Something attempted, something done, has earned a night's repose.' You have the satisfaction of having sacrificed yourself in the interests of Mr. Travers."

He had found a talking point. He had reminded me of those postal orders, sometimes for as much as ten bob, which Uncle Tom had sent me in the Malvern House days.

I softened. Whether or not a not unmanly tear rose to my eye, I cannot say, but it may be taken as official that I softened.

"How right you are, Jeeves," I said.

THE END

© *P. G. Wodehouse, 1959*

The novel "How Right You Are, Jeeves," by P. G. Wodehouse, will be published next year by Herbert Jenkins. Price 12s. 6d.

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Robinson's

LEMON BARLEY and GLUCOSE

for Refreshment and Energy

—says *OLD HETHERS*

Bracegirdle and the brothers

continued from page 12

our house, it might look as if someone else had killed him for that. But if we said we'd had it all. . . ."

"I might think that Toomey hadn't lent it to you at all, is that what you were going to say? That he refused, and your husband followed him, and killed him, and took the lot?"

"Yes." It was a mere whisper.

"Why did you decide to tell me?"

It took her a long time to get it out. "It wouldn't look as if I believed in Burt if I had to lie about what happened, would it?"

"There's something in that," Bracegirdle said. "Mrs. Jarrold, you'd better have a good cry. Go home, and I'll think over what you've told me."

He joined Strake in the next room. Strake, who had heard the conversation, was pursing his thick lips.

"Tough," he said.

"Very tough. One curious thing, Strake. Why didn't she go the whole distance and say that Toomey turned them down and she never saw the money till Burt came back with it?"

"You couldn't expect that."

"I'm not sure," Bracegirdle muttered. "I've an idea that if it had happened that way, she would have told me."

The inspector toyed with the idea of paying Burt Jarrold a second visit, but decided against it. There were routine matters to attend to, and he wanted to put the whole thing before the chief constable.

After all, Burt Jarrold was on ice. If he ran away, he wouldn't run far. By tomorrow morning he might have softened up sufficiently to give a slightly different account of his activities.

To avoid any scene with his wife, the obvious course was to get Burt down to the police station alone. And Bracegirdle was taking steps to that end, at ten o'clock next morning, when Walter Jarrold's big American car stopped outside.

WALTER JARROLD, shorter and more aggressive than his younger brother, stalked into the office.

"What's this about Burt?" he shouted. "It's all over the town. If you want to make yourself a bigger fool than usual, Bracegirdle, arrest him."

"If I decide to do that," the inspector told him smoothly, "no consideration for you will prevent me."

"Then do it. But before you do, use whatever grey matter lies dormant in your thick skull! Where were you when the old man was killed? Where was I, where were seventy others?"

"Am I expected to answer that?"

"I'll tell you. In the Palatine restaurant. Where were you sitting? Right opposite Middleton and me. When did Travis finish his phoney presidential address and Middleton get on his hind legs? Nine fifteen exactly. Now, did I go out to my car or didn't I? And what did I go for?"

"Something for your stomach, I believe." The inspector kept his temper well in hand.

"Exactly! Because the food there had just about burst my ulcer. Did I use the phone on my way down?"

"I don't remember——" Bracegirdle began, then bit back the words. For he did remember. Walter Jarrold had asked a waitress if there was a public telephone on the premises or would he have to go to the manager's office.

"I rang my brother," Walter Jarrold said. "My brother Burt. That was at twenty minutes past nine, Bracegirdle. It was after nine when the old man left Burt's house. My brother couldn't have followed him down the path to the canal, killed him, gone back to his car, and answered the phone when I rang at nine twenty."

The inspector considered that, slowly nodding his head. "But how can you prove," he said, "that it was in fact your brother you telephoned, and not some other person?"

Walter Jarrold pushed out his chin. "I'll pay for an advertisement in next Friday's *Holtrigg Gazette*. If any person will come forward and swear that Walter Jarrold rang him up on Tuesday night at twenty minutes past nine, there's a hundred pounds for him."

He picked up his gloves. "Use your head, Bracegirdle," he said as he left.

Strake watched the door close behind Jarrold. "I never liked him," he said.

"Neither did I, but if he's speaking the truth, it lets his brother out. And if he isn't, it won't be easy to prove."

He frowned across the desk at Strake, thinking about the sequence of events Walter Jarrold had just outlined. While Travis was speaking, Middleton had been fidgeting with a sheet of notes beside his glass. Walter Jarrold, next to Middleton, had been feeling through his pockets as if he had lost something.

Now Bracegirdle could remember it more clearly. Middleton offering a box of matches to Jarrold, who shook his head and said no, he must have left the damned tablets in his car.

Then turning to ask the waitress about the telephone. . . .

He got up angrily. "You'd better start checking old Toomey's cronies," he told Strake. "Find out if you can whether any characters, suspicious or otherwise, were seen around Canal Baulk or on the towpath——"

He broke off, looking at the shadow on the glass door. "Oh, *no*!" he said.

It was Kay Jarrold. She gave him her calm, diffident smile. "I had to come," she said, "because Burt's so upset. He doesn't know I'm here."

Bracegirdle pulled a chair towards the fire, and she sat down. "Why is Burt upset?" he asked.

"Because Walter called this morning. Really early. He said you're going to arrest Burt. Is that true?"

Bracegirdle said nothing to that. "He said there was only one chance—he was going to tell you that he telephoned Burt at twenty past nine on Tuesday night."

"Your husband agreed?" he asked.

"Yes. But I knew it wouldn't—it couldn't work."

"It must have needed a lot of courage to tell me this, Mrs. Jarrold."

"Oh, not really." She flushed and turned away. "But I know Burt didn't do it, so there's no point in lying."

Bracegirdle glanced at the basket. "If you have any shopping to do, could you call back in about an hour? If I'm not here, wait for me."

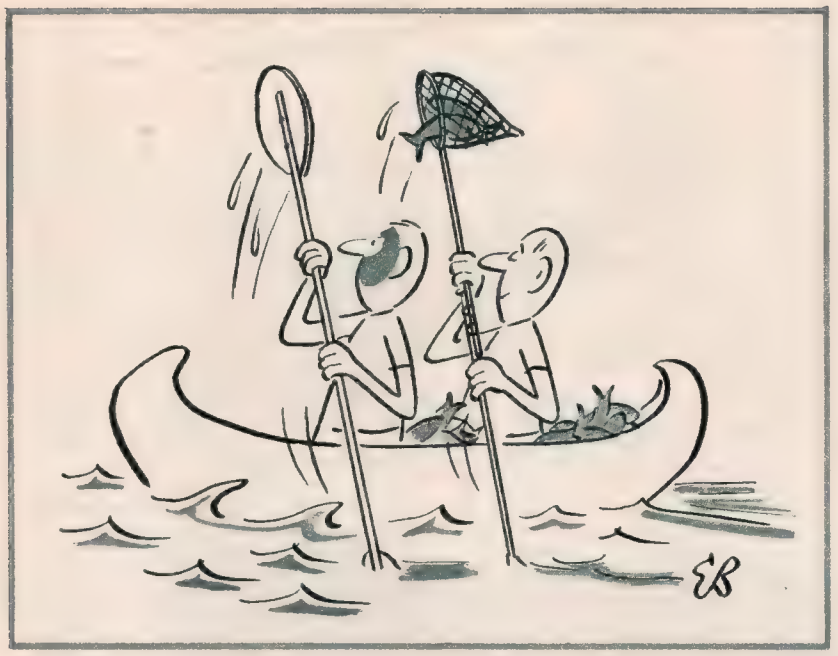
It took him some little time to get over the shock. Very few people, he mused, have a positive regard for the truth. Strake came in, sympathetically silent, and that irritated the inspector.

"I wonder what's happening inside that keen analytical brain of yours?" he asked sardonically.

"You never let me do any straight thinking, sir."

"Strake, I wonder how often I've

THUMBTHING by Stowell



tried to bully people into remembering, and accused them of lying when they said they couldn't remember?"

"Sir?"

"Tuesday night." The inspector rubbed his blue chin. *"How long was Jarrold out of that room?"*

"I wasn't present, sir."

"He went to the phone, to his car. I couldn't say whether he was out five minutes, ten, or twenty. Next time I saw him he was standing by the door, listening to the tail-end of Middleton's speech. Came in clapping his hands. . . . Must have heard most of it, anyway, because everything he said in his own speech was in reply to it."

The sergeant spoke in a flat voice. "I wouldn't bother too much about that, sir. Middleton's been making the same speech for ten years. New market hall and widening High Street. I could reply to it any time without hearing it."

"And Middleton," the inspector said slowly, "had a page of notes on the table beside him." He grabbed the sergeant's arm. "Get the car, quick."

Five minutes later they were at the entrance to the Palatine car park. "Now drive along Canal Baulk to the path, and take it steady."

Canal Baulk was a narrow road running parallel with the canal, practically deserted since the waterway had fallen into disuse. When they reached the point where the footpath crossed it, Bracegirdle got out and walked to the trodden patch of grass on the canal bank. He stood there for three minutes, then came back to the car.

"Car park again, sir?"

"Yes, and don't rush it."

At the car-park entrance he glanced at his watch. "Eleven minutes. Add four to get from the restaurant to the car park and back again."

"I don't follow you, sir."

"Why was Walter Jarrold so emphatic that he had rung no one else on the phone? Suppose he'd thought that a phone call and the tablets together would give him an excuse to stay out of the room for a fair time. Then realized, afterward, that someone might ask *who* he had rung up?"

"So he thought up this lark about saying he'd rung Burt at nine twenty."

"Exactly. Partly, perhaps to protect his brother. But more to cover himself."

BRACEGIRDLE strode into the car park. "You're wrong," Strake said. "You tell me how he could have got his car out, jammed the way it always is when they've got a do on."

"Yes, jammed by my car for one," Bracegirdle said. "I don't know." Then he turned sharply and hurried up the steps that led into the cinema foyer. The manager was coming out of his office and Bracegirdle called after him.

"There's a motor-cycle in your car park. Does it belong to one of your staff?"

"It'll be Charlie's. Second operator."

"Mind if I have a word with him?"

"Help yourself, Inspector. You know the way. They've just been running the trailers through."

Followed by Strake, the inspector climbed to the box. "Charlie, is that your motor-cycle out in the car park?"

"Sure." Charlie gave him a hostile glance. "What's up with it?"

"I haven't looked. . . . Was it there on Tuesday night?"

"Yep."

"When you went home, did you notice if it had been moved?"

Charlie shook his head. "Not a thing. Wait a minute, though. It's not Fred you're after?"

"Who's Fred?"

"Our third. It's his morning off. He runs a two-stroke. Said yesterday somebody must have been mucking around with it the night before because the engine was warm. . . ."

She was patiently waiting when they got back. On the way, Bracegirdle had tied several ends for Strake's benefit. Premeditated, of course. Either there would be a will leaving all Toomey's money to Walter and Burt, or there wouldn't and they'd get it anyway.

Couldn't have been done at all if Walter hadn't known almost to the minute when Old Toomey would come along the footpath. Clever, all of it.

Even going to his car for the tablets. Or, more probably, for an old mackintosh to cover his dinner-jacket and a crash-helmet that would make him as anonymous as a man from Mars.

She looked tired and wan as they came into the room. "It *was* Walter?" she asked.

"I don't think you've anything to worry about, Mrs. Jarrold."

"But it was? And you're going there now?"

"We'll take you home first."

"He won't be there, Mr. Bracegirdle. Walter won't be there. You see—I thought it was right to tell you what I did. But I thought it was right to warn Walter, too. So I rang him up."

Bracegirdle stared at her.

"After all, he's Burt's brother."

"Yes. You'd better go home."

"I can go on my own."

"Just as you like. And tell Burt that he's married to a remarkable girl."

A ghost of a smile, and she had gone.

Bracegirdle watched her from the window. "Flight," he said, "is always half-way to proof of guilt. She knows that, Strake. It wasn't brotherly love that made her warn Walter. She's a very remarkable girl." THE END

© *Thurman Warriner, 1959*

COWARDS—2

He who fears to go as far as his heart urges and his reason permits is a coward.

Heine

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59/9

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The red snows

continued from page 16

in the air. Everybody kept looking up towards the moraine for signs of George and Mike. They were due to arrive at midday. At 10 a.m. all was ready.

We sat on our rucksacks, talking, looking at the skyline and keeping an eye on our watches. With two such experienced climbers as George and Mike everything must be all right. Surely, just before twelve, their figures would appear among the boulders on the skyline.

At 11.45 we knew that the time had come to organize the rescue party.

It was a relief to have something to do, something to deflect our minds from their constant search of all the terrible possibilities. We quickly unpacked the essential equipment and made plans. All of us, except Dave Thomas and Ralph Jones, who were still unable to move fast, would go up beneath the North Ridge of Dych-tau—the route of descent for George and Mike. If we found them there, we would send back a message that all was well. But if the Academy of Sciences Camp had not heard anything by nine o'clock next morning, they would send out two parties, one to join us for a traverse of the mountain from north to south, the other to go round to the moraine on the south side.

We set off with Ulla, a charming girl from the Academy Camp, as our guide.

Are they alive?

The sun had gone and the mists were around us again. It was not a pleasant walk up. Every eventuality passed through our minds. I recalled the occasions on which even the most competent mountaineers had come to grief. It was strange how the mind dwelt on the sad and unpleasant things. George and Mike could be lost, dead or alive, anywhere on the huge sprawling mass of Dych-tau.

We trudged on, following in the footsteps of Ulla, stopping only to fill our water bottles. Soon we were on the sharp edge of the moraine. The rocky scree rose for three hundred feet on our left. I kept thinking I could see movement up there. But it was always only a glistening patch of water or an upright boulder. Until, suddenly, I was sure there was something moving. That must be two figures. Alan was peering through the binoculars.

"Yes," he said, "two figures in green and brown windproof suits."

A great cheer went up—and we were running along the narrow path towards our friends. Grinning, we all shook hands.

George was saying: "Sorry, but we missed the route on the descent and had great trouble in getting off the mountain."

That did not matter. They were safe. True, we had lost a day in our tight programme, and it was doubtful if we would now be able to cross into Svanetia and get back to Moscow in time. But that did not worry us now.

George and Mike had made a magnificent new route, of very great difficulty, on Europe's third summit.

Our plans were made for us the next morning. We were up at 5 a.m. but the weather had broken in earnest and it was raining hard. Under such conditions it would be dangerous to cross the Tsanner Pass. The oasis of Svanetia would have to wait.

We struck our tents for the second time and ferried all the equipment down to the river which was already swollen and milky.

It was a four-hour march down the valley with the wet, lush grass soaking our feet and the rain pouring down our necks. The river was in full spate and there was a continuous muffled roar as huge boulders were hurled along its bed. At one point the river had overflowed the bank and was swirling against the rock wall of the gorge. George, Mike, Alan and I tried to jump from boulder to boulder but I slipped on one and only just saved myself, gripping the slippery stone as my legs fell into the swirling current.

As we reached an old broken-down farm house at the end of the road we could hear a lorry coming from the Spartak Camp, eleven hours away. It bounded along the path to meet us. There was the driver, Anatoli, and the deputy camp chief, Alexandrivitch, beaming with pleasure at seeing us again.

Huddled over the wet baggage in the back of the open truck, we started the perilous return trip down the gorge, sliding along the muddy road with the rock wall overhanging us on one side and the river roaring and pounding on the other. It was even more impressive than the outward journey. The clouds hung a hundred feet above our heads and we were enclosed in the rocky jaws of the mountains. After a quick stop for petrol at 7 p.m., we drove on to Mineralnye-Vody airport.

"You must be hungry as hunters," said Uri Borshenko, the airport official. He had a book containing five hundred idiomatic English phrases and he knew them all.

Muddy and soaking, we sat down in the velvet-draped, lace-curtained dining-room to eat a meal which we had eaten in our thoughts many times: salad, chicken soup, steaks and fried egg, cheese, and red and white Georgian wines which were like nectar.

This was the moment when the paths of our small group of English mountaineers and those Russians who had welcomed us with such warmth, diverged. We drank toasts to each other. Everyone grew voluble with the wine and made little speeches. Even Anatoli, our splendid lorry driver, got up and said that he was pleased to have driven us around his mountains.

"I am only a humble driver," he

ARE YOU COURAGEOUS?

See page 18

Your answers to the questions on page 18 should be scored as follows:

1. (a) 0. (b) 5. (c) 10.
2. (a) 10: (b) 0. (c) 5.
3. (a) 10. (b) 5. (c) 0.
4. (a) 10. (b) 0. (c) 0.
5. (a) 5. (b) 0. (c) 10.
6. (a) 10. (b) 5. (c) 5. (d) 0.
7. (a) 0. (b) 10. (c) 0.
8. (a) 0. (b) 0. (c) 10. (d) 0.
9. (a) 5. (b) 10. (c) 0.
10. (a) 0. (b) 10. (c) 0.

A total of 90-100 suggests that you have cheated or that you are so confident of your moral and physical strength that you tend to bully others. 70-85 are the marks for a really courageous person, who may suffer for his principles, and other people's admiration may be tinged with envy. 60-65 is a total which will be pretty normal for people who can hold their heads high as morally resolute and brave. A score of 55 or less suggests that an over-sensitive conscience is producing that cowardice suggested by Shakespeare.

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said. "But I do my job as well as I can and it has given me great pleasure to be of some use, even if I am only one of the smallest cogs in the great machinery of my country. I try to do my job as well as I can and I wish you all, success and happiness on the mountains and in your work."

Forty-eight hours later we were sipping drinks in the garden of the British Embassy in Moscow. For the first time for more than a month we had had a bath and a change of clothes. Already our struggles with the Caucasian mountains were fading into memories.

But there, in that garden, we were able to piece together the strange and bewildering story of the Russians and Everest.

On September 12, 1953, *The Times* reported that the previous December the Russians had made a vain attempt on Everest which ended in the loss of six lives.

Then on October 20, 1953, the *Manchester Guardian* quoted *La Tribune de Genève* as saying that the Russians were planning an expedition to Everest in 1954.

When Eugene Beletski and Eugene Gippenreiter visited London in 1955 to lecture to the Alpine Club, I asked them whether they knew of these reports and whether there was any truth in them.

"None whatsoever," the Russians assured me. "We are amazed at these stories."

At that time I had not been prepared to believe the Russian denial. It was typical of the Russians to try to suppress the news of a disaster.

When, on our arrival in Moscow, we had been entertained by Russian mountaineers in the Journalists' Club, they questioned John Hunt and George Band closely about the use of oxygen equipment on Everest and about the route on the north side of Everest which had been used by the prewar British expeditions. Twice, in 1924 and 1933, these British expeditions had attained a height of over 28,000 feet—less than a thousand feet below the summit.

After the war Tibet was closed to Western expeditions, but after the Chinese invasion of the country in 1950 it would obviously be possible for Communist expeditions to attempt the north ridge of Everest.

As a result of the meeting in the Journalists' Club, I became increasingly convinced that there was some truth in the reports that the Russians had attempted Everest in 1952.

While we were at the Spartak Camp much interest was shown in our equipment, and more questions were asked about Everest. Gradually, it became obvious that even if the Russians had not sent an expedition to Everest, they were going to do so in the near future.

The Russians, apparently, were planning a joint Russian-Chinese reconnaissance expedition for 1959, with a full-scale assault in 1960.

The expedition would consist of some sixty mountaineers, with a Chinese leader. The deputy leader and chief of climbing would be a Russian—probably Abalakov or Beletski.

At the garden party at the British Embassy we were able to complete the story. Eugene Beletski was there, and he had flown to Peking to negotiate details of the expedition.

"Nothing," he said, "was finally settled. When you become involved in politics things are very tricky."

With these new facts at our disposal we were able to consider again the truth of the reports of a Russian expedition in 1952. It did not seem conceivable that the Russians could have attempted Everest at a time of year—November—when the winds are strong enough to sweep a man off the north ridge.

Furthermore, they knew enough about the dangers of mountaineering not to have gone into such an enterprise unprepared. In the light of this information I investigated the various newspaper reports and discovered that they had all come in the first instance from Berlin. It seemed more than likely that an East German mountaineer who knew something of Russian climbing had defected to the West and, being short of money, had sold a good story to the press.

Furthermore, when one knows the character of a man, it is far easier to judge whether he is telling the truth, and I was certain, after having lived with him for four weeks, that if Eugene Gippenreiter said that there had been no expedition, he was telling the truth.

If the Russians carry on with their plans for 1959 and 1960, there is no doubt that they stand a very good chance of getting to the top.

What they lack in technical skill and experience with oxygen equipment, they certainly make up for in vitality and drive.

THE END

© *Christopher Brasher and Sir John Hunt, 1959*

"The Red Snows," by Christopher Brasher and Sir John Hunt, is due to be published as a book by Hutchinson on January 11 at 25s.

COWARDS—3

A coward will never show mercy.

Sir Thomas Malory

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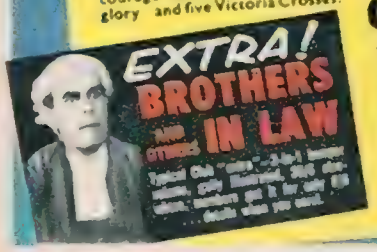

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The gold of Delilah

continued from page 22

until three months ago. I'm not an ornithologist—and I apologize for that story. I'm what you might call an investigator, and I'm on to a very tricky problem. First of all, there are birds of paradise being shipped through Lae, and someone's getting big money for them. Someone in Lae. We've picked up one or two consignments at the Sydney end, and we wouldn't know it was Lae but for one thing. One of the birds is unique to the district—this district; and the only way out of here is through Lae. The bird is a *Paradisidae rubra Samuelsii* — mean anything to you?"

I SAID "No." I was wary. Then I remembered what Stamford had said. "There was a bird identified by a bloke named Samuels, years ago."

"That's the ticket," he said. "Now the score is, not only does the contraband come through Lae, but it comes from this range of mountains—and you have the only transport from here. Still mean nothing to you?"

I sat down on a pile of lumber.

"Now wait a minute," I said. "That puts me on the spot?"

"You might say it does—yes," said Tully. "On the other hand, I've been having a good look around, having a good talk around too, and I don't think so. I don't think you're carrying the stuff unless you're doing it without knowing it. Do you carry anything that would take dry birds?"

Packaged birds of paradise are more than a foot long, shaped roughly like a corn-cob. I shook my head.

"Big parcels of timber, little parcels of gold," I said. "Empty oil drums, that's all."

"Wouldn't be the drums—the oil would destroy the feathers," said Tully. And then it hit me.

"Animoa's wife-train," I shouted. "Come on, I'll show you."

Loading was finished. We climbed in, and Tully sat on the end of the stack of timber, behind my right shoulder. We wheeled out. The Dragon trundled along, raced down the incline, and I lifted her across the gully. We cleared the ridge and I looked back at my passenger. Tully was wiping his forehead.

"That was close," he said.

"Twelve feet," I guessed. "It's been closer. I wasn't banking on a passenger but I leave myself a margin. If I get a tail-wind for take-off I have to come out three parts empty."

An hour's flying took us to the bare kunai-grass hills, and we followed along the main ridge because I wanted to find the women. An hour and a half from the airstrip we saw them, a file of tiny brown dots skirting the hills.

We flew low above them and they looked up; but they didn't stop their busy padding down the trail. They were still, I reckoned, about four days from Lae. There was a small airstrip on their road a day or more ahead of them, and we decided to intercept them there the next day.

"No good leaving it until they get into Lae. There may be arrangements for meeting them on the road somewhere," Tully decided.

AFTER dinner that night, I brought Tully with me to the McGinnis house; and Judy looked at him very hard as he climbed up the steps to the veranda.

"Nasty looking bruise you have on your cheek, Mr. Tully," she commented, and he grinned a little bit.

"I guess I must have walked into a situation," he said. I liked him for that.

"Old Animoa smuggling birds!" she said when we had explained it all to her. "It's easy enough to believe, but he's certainly been quiet about it. What will happen to him?"

"Jail," said Tully briefly. "And he'll probably have to give up the store."

"Then here's where McGinnis Mines goes into the store business," Judy said in a forthright sort of way.

"It'll be a help," I said, thinking of the loading.

Tully excused himself early, and left us talking.

"The store will be a help, but no solution," Judy said. "I'm flat, Alan. McGinnis Mines is a dead-letter. I'd pack up now and get out except for. . . ."

"Except for the shareholders," I finished for her. She nodded, soberly.

"And for Dad," she said. "He's not so terribly aware, these days, but it would break his heart to leave here, a failure. The shareholders can wait a little. Somehow, someday, I'll get them paid back. One other thing," she changed the subject suddenly. "I'm coming with you two tomorrow."

"Oh no you're not," I said.

"Oh yes I am," she insisted. "If there's a magisterial inquiry into this, and Animoa puts up a fight, a female witness on your side is going to help."

WE talked of other things, and there was a smell of freshly pulled ginger in the air, and the night was beautiful, and the warmth of it was clinging, but we were both a little sad, for Delilah was coming apart around our heads, and there was nothing very much we could do to stop it.

To the west of Amarandi airstrip, Animoa's trade-route crossed a largish stream and then approached the airstrip under the shelter of an ancient river-bank; and it was at the back of this bank that we waited.

They came to the opposite bank of the river, a quarter of a mile upstream, about three in the afternoon, and we watched them make their way across, slowly, their bare feet feeling for a good hold on the round boulders of the stream-bed, and their skirts swirling in the downstream eddies of the current. They came in twos and threes, not helping one another, as European women might, but each one confidently independent. Several times I saw one stagger, and shivered, for the boulders in the stream were muttering, grinding against each other; and the heavy load swinging from each head might have carried the woman down, after a mis-step.

As each woman came across she relieved herself of the weight of the cargo-net straining against her forehead, and the two with babies took them from their net cradles and began to nurse them.

When they were all on the bank we came out in full view and walked down to them. They watched our arrival impassively. There was no communication. None of the women could talk pidgin, and none of us could talk the language of the village.

So we just walked down and began to go through the bags. The first I came to had a burlap bag of rice, forty pounds of it, and about ten pounds of fresh ginger rhizomes—Animoa had begun planting a little of the crop in the previous year.

The second was ginger and taro. In the third net there were parcels wrapped in grass and wedged into bamboo sections, lying between a bottom layer of taro and a top of ginger. I knew what they were immediately, but I broke one open to make sure and called Tully over. It was a bird all right, a red bird of paradise, its plumage fire colours.

Tully whistled. But Judy came up too, and Judy had something to say. She said it as though she were interested in the bird I had found—all the women were watching us. But she said: "That tall Mary took something from her bag, and carried it over to where she is standing. She stops when I watch her, but I think she is burying it with her toes."

"Keep an eye on her," Tully said. "I'll attend to her in a moment." He was re-wrapping the bird. "I'll take this one with me, leave the others with the women. I'll go on down to Lae and see what contacts they make," he said to me. "It should be fairly easy. I don't think they'll be on guard down there. Apparently they've never had trouble."

The tall girl moved away. I walked over to where she had been standing. I could see the little disturbance in the gravel. I dug in with my fingers, and pulled out a sweet potato.

"What is it?" Tully called.

"Catch," I told him, and threw it. He missed it. It hit the bank behind him, and broke in a way no sweet potato should break—flat across the middle. In its scooped-out interior was a bottle of gold.

When we weighed it later there was nearly fifty ounces, all coarse gold; with a high—a very high—proportion of the little nuggets that had been so unaccountably absent from McGinnis wash-ups in recent years.

EVENTS occurred so quickly after that that Delilah changed almost overnight. I flew in five loads of Sepik boys to replace the mine labour, and we kept the best of the old mine-gangs on at the sawmill.

So there we were, sitting pretty. The mine proved itself on the next wash-up—I couldn't have believed that the patient fingers of Animoa's men could have removed so much gold, piece by little piece; a handful of the concentrated pay-dirt here, a handful there, filched from behind the riffles.

"What would you say to a merger—our mine, your carrying business?" Judy asked me.

"That sounds wonderful," I said. I had been thinking something along those lines. We were sitting on the tree-stump in the clearing, and the fireflies were dancing under the trees.

"We'll call it the Bird of Paradise Mining, Milling and Aviation Company," I said. She folded her hands, and looked at her toes.

"Too long," she said.

"We'll call it Delilah Enterprises," I tried.

She looked up in my face and smiled.

"Delilah's a little short on enterprise," she said. I looked at her for a moment until I got her meaning. Then I took her in my arms. THE END

© *Olaf Ruhen, 1959*

"The doctor said give him a good spanking, whatever that is"

All these events took place in the same year—but

Which year?

The two diplomats, Burgess and Maclean, disappeared.

The King and Queen of Denmark arrived in London on a State visit.

Romance of the year, resulting in marriage, was Frank Sinatra's love for Ava Gardner.

In February the steel industry was nationalised.

TV was successfully used underwater to locate the sunken submarine Affray.

On April 8 this year we were all counted—in the national census.

The Persian oil industry was nationalised.

Jimmy Edwards, the comedian, was elected Rector of Aberdeen University.

You had to start paying for spectacle frames and dentures under the National Health Service.

The King underwent a serious lung operation in the autumn.

"What's My Line?" appeared for the first time on B.B.C. Television.

King Leopold of Belgium abdicated and his son, Baudouin, acceded to the throne.

Now turn to page 37 for the year

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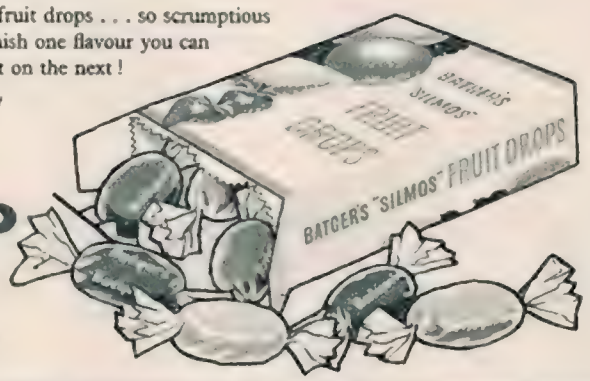

9D

PER QUARTER

ALSO IN CARTONS

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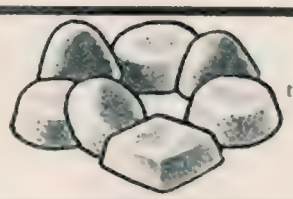


. . . So wonderfully chewy and refreshing—especially when the sun's bright and you want to drink in those fruit flavours!

10d. Cartons

Lancastria

continued from page 8

seven hundred troops at a time were loaded into the side of the great liner.

Animals were not officially allowed to be taken on board and yet, as the major passed the mouth of the entrance to the ship, he noticed two dogs tied up nearby. Both were mongrels: a large retriever crossed with alsatian, and a smaller, ginger coloured terrier-and-pomeranian.

Their tails wagged slowly but in vain, as they waited there, a few yards from the endless procession of khaki-clad strangers, hopeful of recognizing a friend or being recognized by a master.

The major went to the cabin marked on his allotment ticket and found it was a four-bunker in the second class.

He slung his kit on to a top bunk—the two lower ones had been booked—and was shortly followed in by four other officers, making seven in all. Feeling very tired indeed, and anxious if at all possible to secure quieter accommodation, the major went back to see the purser.

The purser could offer no help at all, though he sympathized with the request. After examining the allotment ticket he looked up, smiling and shaking his head.

"Sorry, sir, but that's the best I can do. You're lucky to get a bunk at all. Three men will have to sleep on the floor—and two of those are colonels."

COWARDS—4

A coward is one who in a perilous emergency thinks with his legs.

Ambrose Bierce

Meanwhile breakfast was being served in the dining-room.

Bread had been baked on the journey across the Channel, and now with hot food and drink it was being served to men who had almost forgotten what it was like to sit down to a white-covered table and be waited upon.

The menu consisted of grapefruit, porridge, bacon and eggs, toast, marmalade and coffee.

Afterwards the barber's shop and sick berth were much in demand. Hair was shaggy and unkempt; blistered feet were painful.

Hurricane fighters patrolled overhead. Still the troops came on board.

Calm and peaceful

Squadron-Leader Eric Shipp was thinking what a peaceful, orderly scene it looked—there seemed to be no hurry whatever—when, with a brother officer, Bob Doig, he crossed the deck on his way down to the dining-room. On the way, the officers picked up a life-jacket each.

"Just in case," Shipp grinned. "You never know your luck."

On board now there was a strange and motley collection, comprising odds and ends of regiments, lines of communication troops, Naafi officers and staff, R.A.F., and civilians, the latter either in official capacities or as refugees.

Among them were three families, employees of the Belgian associate company of Fairey Aviation, which had a flying field and large workshops at Gosselies, near Charleroi.

On May 15 Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Tillyer, with their two-year-old daughter Jacqueline, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Freeman, with their three-year-old Claudine, and Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin, with their two boys, all left by road for the south. They did not make their way direct to Ostend or Antwerp because there was a plan to establish the company's activity—work included the servicing of Hurricane fighters—in southern France.

The women and children travelled in private cars, the men by tram. They had arranged to meet at Mons, but though the men reached the city safely enough there was no sign of their families. It was found that they had been directed over the frontier in France by guards and customs officials.

After a frantic search the men found their relatives safe and sound, and, after many delays and detours and days and nights in cramped conditions, they finally reached Dompierre sur-Besbre, near Bordeaux.

Here they found a small inn with a kindly landlord, who provided beds, baths and plenty of nourishing food. The men succeeded in contacting their British office, reported the position, and told the company of their intention to escape from the Continent somehow.

A lucky break

For some ten days the group remained at Dompierre, finally deciding to try and make their way to Nantes. Once again luck favoured them and another train brought them in on June 10.

No help could be obtained from the British or Belgian consulates at Nantes, but they secured accommodation at a reasonable hotel, where they met numerous R.A.F. pilots who had been flying Fairey Battles.

On June 15 an R.A.F. Movement Control officer called to say that arrangements had been made for their passage home on a troopship. So early the following day the whole group set off for St. Nazaire, the men walking and the women and children in cars.

It was good to feel the solid deck of a British ship beneath their feet, and to know that at long last they could rest, safe and happy in the knowledge that they would be looked after to the best of the navy's renowned ability.

But hardly had they boarded the Lancastria when an air raid warning sounded. Cliff Tillyer knelt down, saying: "I think we'll have this on, shall we?" He carefully tied little Jacqueline into her lifebelt.

Minor hit-and-run raids took place all that morning, but still the troop loading went on.

At about one-thirty, a trawler with mattresses tied to her superstructure as protection against bullets disembarked yet another party of troops from the mainland. At such a time, when only the barest personal kit was allowed on board, the crew were considerably surprised—not to say impressed—when one soldier, Corporal George Youngs, of the E.F.I./R.A.S.C. carried up a brand-new bicycle.

He had been an orderly room corporal in Rheims and had bought the cycle to save his legs when collecting mail from the army post office three miles away.

Throughout the ensuing retreat the n.c.o. brought his beloved bicycle, guarding it with his life and determined not to part with it at any price.

Soon he had found a place for it, by his side on Lancastria's top deck, from which position the gorgeous machine was fated never to move again.

Private Skelton, with his friend Joe Saxton, had found quite a comfortable position on an upper deck when they first arrived on board.

Reserving their places with kit bags, they decided to go in search of something to drink and found a wet canteen where they bought four bottles of ale.

When they had finished they thought it futile to return the empty bottles. Saxton looked over the side thoughtfully. Skelton guessed what was in his companion's mind, and together they dropped the bottles overboard.

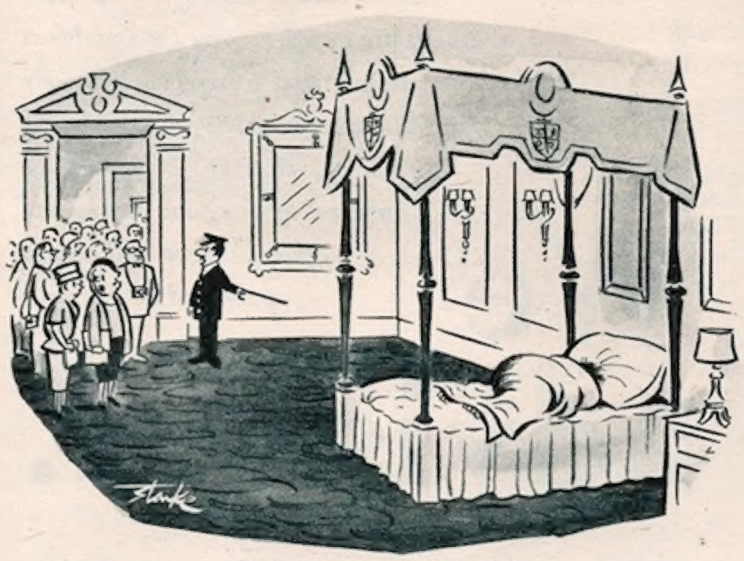
They made small plopping noises on hitting the sea, and Skelton said quietly: "That's a long way to fall. I wouldn't fancy doing it myself."

Troops continued to come on board solidly until about two fifteen that afternoon. Then Sharp decided that he had taken aboard as many men as his ship could hold.

A destroyer asked: "Will you take more?"

"I'm sorry," Sharp replied. "We're overloaded as it is."

"But there are still over two thousand to be got away." Sharp gave a



"Well, he's not *my* idea of a lordship"

sigh. What could one say in such grim circumstances?

A signal came back from a destroyer: "Tell the Lancastria to proceed on her way if satisfied."

But Sharp was far from satisfied. He sent off another message to the effect that he had approximately six thousand men on board (the compilation of nominal rolls was still far from complete) but no protection whatsoever.

The answer was that it would be impossible to provide any form of escort, and the Lancastria had to leave at her own risk.

Believing the sea outside St. Nazaire to be patrolled by U-boats, Sharp thought it would be the lesser of two evils to remain a while longer and hope for assistance later.

In that decision he was unfortunate enough to make history. The Lancastria remained at anchor.

Just before lunch Major Goodwin, R.E., made his way down to No. 1 hold to try to persuade his men to get up and have something to eat. But most of them replied that they would rather stay where they were and sleep, thinking, no doubt, that if they left the hold they would lose their places in the rapidly filling ship.

The major could say or do no more. He turned and left the hold, and, with one exception, never saw his party again.

Lunch time came and with it another raid. There were two planes this time, but the bombs missed.

Just as the stewards were about to serve the meal two explosions shook the saloon. Alarm bells clanged again throughout the ship, and the watertight doors amidships were closed. As these were placed between the saloon and the galley the meal was necessarily postponed.

The all-clear bugle was soon sounded and the belated lunch arrived.

After their meal Shipp and Doig returned to their cabin, which was on the first deck below the main one, almost amidships and practically beneath the bridge. The cabin was hot and stuffy. Both men stretched out on their bunks and dozed off.

It was five minutes past three when Shipp awoke and looked at his watch. He glanced at his companion, who was fast asleep and snoring gently.

From somewhere overhead came the faint but unmistakable beat of German aircraft engines. Shipp opened his eyes, looked up to the ceiling and muttered aloud: "Wonder what the hell they're after—as if I don't know!"

"They're probably out on recce," said Doig, who yawned and was quickly asleep again.

By about half past three all troops had been ordered below decks, but with the ship packed almost to overflowing it was impossible to enforce this order and many who preferred the open air found excuses for staying there.

Fifty armed men

Fifty men, armed with rifles and machine guns, stood on top of the hatches, blazing away at the sky as though defying the raiders to come within range.

A watcher at the stern shouted: "Look—that one's coming straight for us!"

His companions followed his pointing arm and saw a silver streak flashing through the sky towards them.

Another shout. "He's going to hit us!"

The plane changed course slightly, still diving steeply, as if the German pilot had decided to ram the ship with his machine. The scream of a bomb replaced the noise of the diving plane. Louder and louder it sounded.

Then came the first impact, followed by a deathly silence, clouds of smoke and steam and a rain of debris.

A major just happened to be remarking to his cabin companions, "It's quite safe; according to the navy only one bomb in two hundred scores a direct hit," when the porthole of his cabin was smashed inwards on its stout hinges and the woodwork around shivered into splinters.

A corporal named Wright half-ran, half-fell down a ladder leading to one of the big holds in front of the bridge. There he adjusted his tin hat.

Immediately he was picked up like a straw in a hurricane, and hurled with tremendous force, head first, against a steel bulkhead.

When he opened his eyes men were screaming and the air was filled with an overpowering stench of cordite and burned flesh.

At first Wright could not move, but

Answers to Everybody's Puzzling
See page 28

FRED BORDERS'S BRAIN TEASER

Each friend has travelled two-thirds of the journey, and at that time three people were travelling. The cost of the two-thirds is £3, and each man should pay one-third of this sum; i.e., they should each pay Jack £1.

QUIZZLE

Quotation: The blessed damozel leaned out from the gold bar of Heaven. (Dante Gabriel Rossetti).
Clue Down: The man on the flying trapeze.
Clues Across: (A) Thatch; (B) Henbane; (C) Esplanade; (D) Molasses; (E) Asteroid; (F) Node; (G) Oakum; (H) Nippon; (I) Tzigane; (J) Helvellyn; (K) Equestrian; (L) Feud; (M) Locum; (N) Yalta; (O) Infirmary; (P) Nepotism; (Q) Girth; (R) Termagant; (S) Roulade; (T) Ambassador; (U) Pontiff; (V) Euchre; (W) Zouave; (X) Eminence.

Which year? *See page 35*
The year was 1951

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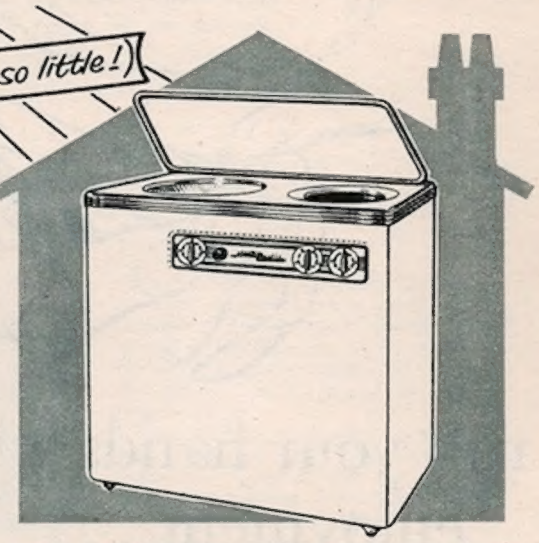

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FARNBOROUGH
in Box Calf and
Willow with resin sole

NORVIC

Readers seeking advice from our team of experts are invited to send their problems to John Bull : Everybody's Weekly Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Letters will be answered by post, and problems of general interest will also be published on this page

We advise . . .

EARLIER this year, I ended a television hire agreement, and the set was taken away. The aerial, however, was left on my house, where it still remains. What is my position if I use this aerial for my own set? And does the aerial become my property after a certain period?—C. L., Bedfordshire.

● It is possible the television firm has abandoned the aerial, as it may cost them more to remove it than it is worth. If, however, it was part of the hire agreement, you could compel them to remove it if you wished. There is no reason why you should not use it, but it does not legally become your property until it has been left for such a time as might permit you to presume it had been abandoned.

STILL THERE

MY neighbours and I are annoyed by the presence in our purely residential road of a builder's yard and workshop housed in an old, tumbledown barn. Two of the neighbours who have lived here since the houses were built in 1936 say the builder gave them a verbal promise that the barn-workshop would be taken down as soon as the houses were completed. Is there any way of making him honour his promise? Or could we succeed in a claim for reassessment of local rating? —H. B., Stoke-on-Trent.

● The builder's verbal promise would have no legal significance unless it was for some special consideration and actually formed a contract. If your house was valued for rating when the building was in use, reassessment is unlikely, but it might possibly be worth while having a word with the council's valuation officer.

SUN-TRAP WANTED

I WISH to build a brick sun-trap on to my bungalow on a new private estate. Must I submit plans to the local council? If I build it open at the front, will its value be added to the rateable value of the property?—J. C., Kent.

● You must have the plans approved by the council before you would be permitted to build. The council's surveyor would be able to tell you of their requirements and you should have a word with him. If the structure increases the "rent value" of the bungalow, it may be assessed for an additional rate.

IT'S UP TO YOU

IF a person does not receive an income tax form from the Inspector of Taxes and knows that he is liable to pay tax, is it that person's duty to inform the local authority, or should the initiative be left to the inspector? — A. D., Bedford Park, W.4.

● The onus is on the taxpayer to render his return, even if no form has been issued to him.

ARE THEY MINE?

COULD you please tell me whether articles left in a house become the property of the new owner of the house after a given length of time?—M. H., Ilkley, Yorks.

● Unless there is any agreement to the contrary, any claim to them would be barred after six years. If you are aware of the owner's name and address, you should write and tell him that if the articles are not removed within a stated time, you will put them in storage and charge the cost to him. But if you

continued from previous page

gradually managed to struggle to his feet, dazed, sick and badly bruised.

His helmet now lay on the floor. Gingerly he stooped to retrieve it and saw a deep dent, slashed right across the crown, where the heavy metal protection had saved his life.

Something like a flash of lightning erupted near Private Skelton. Amid the general uproar he turned to speak to Joe Saxton, but his friend was nowhere to be seen. He had been blown to eternity.

Skelton's right shoulder was dripping blood. His brain and body were numb with shock. Instinctively he realized that his best chance of safety lay in the sea. He lurched towards the rail, thinking of the bottles which had been flung overboard; bodies would fall like that.

He called to a nearby soldier: "Well, here goes, chum. All the best!" He was poised, bracing himself for the jump. "Wait a minute," the man shouted back. "You're not going in like that, are you?"

"Like what, mate?"

"Take your boots and clothes off, or you'll sink."

"I'll sink anyway," Skelton replied. "I can't swim." He waved his hand. "Cheerio, pal." Then he closed his eyes and vaulted over.

Captain Griggs had left the purser's office just as the first bomb penetrated No. 2 hold.

The second bomb that was dropped crashed through the dining-saloon, and as the officer was opening the door he actually saw it pierce the roof. The blast blew him backwards on to the deck, probably saving his life.

When a thick port-hole glass shattered and fell in, Aircraftsman Campbell calmly returned to his shaving-mirror in one of the ablutions, thinking that whatever was going on outside was no concern of his. The tilting floor

consider that the goods have been abandoned and are of slight value, you might safely dispose of them as you wish. But if you sell them, and the owner should turn up, he could claim the amount you received for them.

HOODWINKED

RECENTLY I took the hood and apron of my pram back to the shop where it was purchased, asking that they be returned to the manufacturers to be re-covered. The price quoted was higher than I expected. When the goods were returned, I realized that they had not been re-covered by the manufacturers, and that the materials and workmanship were of an inferior quality. Have I any redress against the shop? If so, how do I go about obtaining it?—Mrs. M. W., Grimsby.

● If the firm agreed to send the hood and apron to the makers for repairs, according to your instructions, and they did not do so, you are not obliged to accept any inferior repairs. If they are not prepared to give you satisfaction, you should get a solicitor to deal with the matter.

CAN HE DO IT?

IS the ordinary policeman on the beat entitled to stop a commercial vehicle for the sole purpose of examining the driver's log book records? Another thing, when a driver is reporting an accident, is he obliged to make a full statement at the time of reporting, or is it sufficient for him merely to report that an accident has taken place, and to state the place and time and give any necessary names and addresses? —A. H., Devon.

● If the police are acting under instructions or have reasonable cause for stopping you and asking to see your log book, they would be legally justified in doing so. When a driver is reporting an accident to the police, he should give all relevant details to enable them to investigate, if necessary, but he cannot be compelled to make any statement if he does not wish to do so.

NO AGREEMENT

A FRIEND who was buying a house gave my name as guarantor for his proposed mortgage, and gave it without my consent. Now the agreement has been sent to me for signature. What am I committed to by signing?—S. P., Manchester.

● You are not obliged to sign as guarantor. If, however, you do sign and your friend defaults in his payments, you will be liable for them.

WALL PROBLEM

IS it possible to paper or paint over emulsion paint? I understand it can, in fact, be used as a sealer. Is this so?—W. J., Kettering.

● It is possible to paint over emulsion paint successfully. It is also possible, but not advisable, to paper. If steam gets through the paper it will bring both paint and paper off the wall. Try sealing the wall with size before papering.

Worth Noting

ROGER SMITHELLS keeps practical homelovers up to date

▸ **Self-adhesive floor tiles:** At last—a self-adhesive vinyl plastic floor tile, which may be laid on top of a concrete, lino or wooden flooring with the minimum of effort. Resistant to grease, fats or boiling water that is accidentally spilled on them, there is a choice of seventeen colours. When laid on a porous floor such as concrete, a special treatment known as Porosan Cement Wash is required. This is applied overnight and left to dry, and leaves the floor receptive for laying the self-adhesive tiles. These tiles cost 1s. 9d. each. By Porosan (D.I.Y.) Ltd., Porosan House, 30 South Street, Chichester, Sussex.

▸ **Non-slip bottles:** Slip a few elastic bands at regular intervals round your bottles of cleaning liquids, so that when your hands are wet you won't drop them. These bands also help to prevent drips running down the sides of the bottles.

▸ **Improved insect-repellent paint:** Recent improvements to the Lakil range of paints include a gloss finish where previously there had only been a flat one. A second improvement has been to rid the paint of its rather unpleasant insecticidal odour. Effective against all insects including woodworm and moths, its properties last for a period of two years. Lakil clear costs 9s. 9d. per pint; Lakil gloss 11s. 6d. per pint; Lakil undercoat 9s. 6d. per pint; Lakil wood primer 8s. 6d. per pint. By Amasal Ltd., Inc. J. Manger and Son, Kingsland, London, E.8.

▸ **Pram cover mat:** If you have a furry pram cover which is no longer in use, dye it. This way it can be made into an attractive floor mat for a cot or bedside.

▸ **Cane for fashion:** A new cane chair with a circular motif, a two-toned table and an attractive cradle-type flower basket, are a few of the items made by disabled ex-servicemen. This furniture, which combines appearance with durability, looks attractive in the garden or would combine happily with a modern interior décor. The chair costs £6 18s. 6d.; the table £3 15s.; and the basket £1 7s. Postage and carriage extra in each case. From the Lord Roberts Workshops Showroom, 122 Brompton Road, London, S.W.1.

caused a quick change of mind, but he collected his toilet accessories before making for the door.

As he stood outside, watching troops mill past, a grey-haired man in a short white coat emerged from a door on the far side of the corridor and shouted above the growing uproar: "Get a doctor to the engine room—it's terrible."

Campbell tried to feel his way along the alley, holding himself off the wall with both hands. He climbed a companionway and came out on the aft deck. As he scrambled through a door he was hit by a heavy coil of rope, which caught him behind the knees and knocked him sprawling towards the sea.

Chief Officer Grattidge returned to the bridge and looked, appalled, at the terrible scene before him.

On the fore-deck, flames and smoke billowed from No. 2 hold, where the large R.A.F. contingent had been billeted.

He grabbed a megaphone and called for ropes to be thrown down to the helpless men. Almost at once the ship took on a strong list to starboard. Grattidge bellowed: "Everyone over to the port side."

But his hopes were short-lived. Although the men on deck struggled hard to obey him, a minute later the great vessel rolled back again sluggishly.

That was the awful moment when he knew the Lancastria could not be saved. Now the shouted orders came fast. "Women and children first."

At last it had to come. Captain Sharp's final command. "Every man for himself now!" he shouted. "Every . . . man . . . for . . . himself!"

© *Geoffrey Bond, 1959*

NEXT WEEK: The fantastic fight in the sea for survival

"Lancastria," by Geoffrey Bond, is published as a book by Oldbourne Press at 18s.

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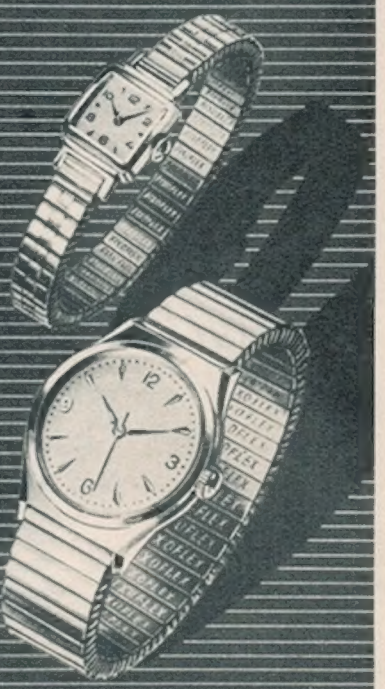

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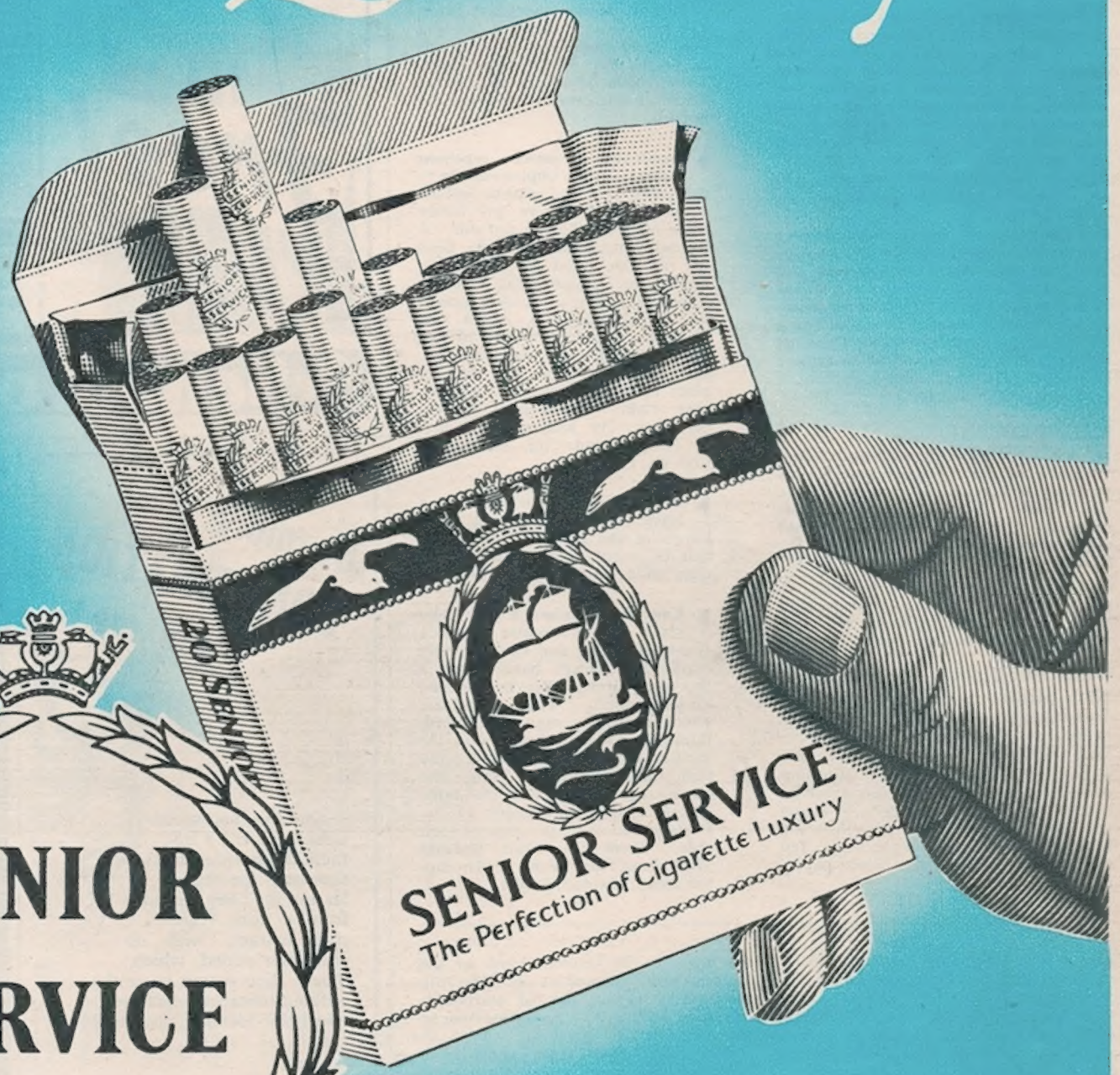

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